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Office of the Auditor General of Canada

**REPORT ON THE STUDY OF  
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE  
YUKON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT**

1993





# REPORT ON THE STUDY OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE YUKON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT

1993



Office of the Auditor General of Canada





AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

VÉRIFICATEUR GÉNÉRAL DU CANADA

To the Honourable Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly:

I have the honour to transmit herewith my Report on the Study of Human  
Resource Management in the Yukon Territorial Government.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "L. Denis Desautels".


L. Denis Desautels, FCA  
Auditor General of Canada

November 1993



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## Section 1

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**1.1** This report presents the results of the study of human resource management in the Yukon Territorial Government (YTG) conducted by the Office of the Auditor General between January and July 1993.

**1.2** The objective of the study was to review and assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the human resource management framework, systems and management-of-people practices, and to make suggestions for improvement. It was conducted in two distinct phases: a general assessment and a detailed examination. The general assessment focused on the framework and systems for human resource management and a preliminary assessment of management-of-people practices. Based on the results of this assessment, we selected three areas for detailed examination: acquisition of staff, human resource information and systems, and a limited number of management-of-people practices. These areas were selected to illustrate some of the issues that, in our opinion, are systemic.

**1.3** The projects on the acquisition of staff and on human resource information and systems were conducted concurrently to identify symptoms and to illustrate inefficient and ineffective practices, their causes and effects. The project on management-of-people practices was then conducted through a survey to validate observations formed during the general assessment and the detailed examination of acquisition of staff systems and practices, and human resource information and systems.

### General Observations

**1.4** Our study demonstrated that, in spite of efforts to renew and revitalize the human resource management function and to address issues or correct known deficiencies, progress has been slow. Significant improvements are possible and are needed in all areas of human resource management.

**1.5** We found that many of the issues — and, in some cases, the solutions — have been known for a long time but little or no corrective action has been taken. In our opinion, this is caused by:

- A legislative and administrative framework and practices that fail to recognize fully:
  - the significant increase in the size and complexity of the YTG, notably in the number of programs and services provided to Yukoners, resulting in the need for more flexible, adaptable and innovative approaches to human resource management;
  - the corresponding increase in the number of policies, programs, rules, procedures and jurisprudence dealing with increasingly complex and important human resource issues, such as collective bargaining and employment equity, and their impact in an era of ongoing fiscal restraint; and

- the key role that departments and agencies must play in human resource management to deliver programs to Yukoners efficiently and effectively and to meet government objectives.
- Inadequate leadership from central agencies and departments that fails to:
  - provide strong, clear and consistent direction and guidance in terms of vision, and goals, objectives, policies and priorities for human resource management;
  - establish adequate mechanisms to co-ordinate the development of human resource policies and systems, to ensure that there is a better balance between the “corporate” needs of YTG and the needs of departments, and to integrate human resource policy and system development with expenditure management and the management of other resources, such as information technology; and
  - enable or empower departments, managers or employees through the delegation of authority compatible with responsibilities and the establishment of effective accountability mechanisms.
- The absence of a performance management culture, as illustrated by the absence of a rigorously managed change process, meaningful performance standards and indicators, and review and evaluation mechanisms for continuous improvement.
- The failure to recognize fully the link between sound management-of-people practices and efficient and effective program delivery to Yukoners. Improvements in services are a function not of rules or systems but of belief, reinforced through day-to-day decisions and actions, that properly led, competent, empowered and well-motivated employees are the key to a more efficient and effective Yukon public service.

**1.6** Because of all these deficiencies, the personnel system is bursting at the seams. Many Public Service Commission officers, departmental managers and other employees are frustrated. There is a climate of mistrust, notably between central agencies and departments and, to a lesser extent, within departments. There are a number of significant problems, including serious inefficiencies, duplication and overlap, that need to be addressed.

**1.7** Based on the results of our survey and other evidence gathered during our study, we also believe that the knowledge, experience and skills of the YTG work force are not being used to their potential.

**1.8** The results of our study demonstrate clearly that the YTG work force is dedicated and motivated to provide better services to Yukoners. The ability to effect significant change is, to a great extent, related directly to the ability of central agencies and departments to capitalize on this dedication and to mobilize the work force during a continuing period of fiscal restraint.



## Acquisition of Staff

**1.9** The objective of this project was to review the activities, functions and practices involved in the acquisition of staff.

**1.10** The staffing process, from the point when former employees departed or managers identified the staffing needs until the positions have been filled, takes on average over 100 days. There are opportunities to reduce the time required; some of these delays are caused by departments, some by the Public Service Commission (PSC), some by other factors. Most delays occur during the planning and selection phases of the staffing process. Delay also results from the plethora of rules and restrictions to reduce the risk of appeals and to deal with many different employment categories. Departmental managers and personnel officers are generally frustrated and dissatisfied with the process.

**1.11** The PSC has a dual role — to control and to provide service. It requires a good balance of both to carry out its responsibilities. However, the perception of the Commission by departments as more control-oriented than service-oriented has caused some tension between them. A positive note is that the Staffing Branch recently initiated a more service-oriented approach to providing support to departments.

**1.12** There is no effective accountability framework for the delegation of staffing responsibilities to departments. Expectations and performance standards are not established, and policies are not always clear. The deficiencies identified have resulted in misconceptions, confusion and variations in the application of policies and rules and in the quality of staffing practices.

**1.13** There is also insufficient training, guidance and support provided to departmental managers and personnel officers. All these weaknesses have exposed the Yukon Territorial Government to greater risk of grievance and appeals; these are costly and time consuming, and they undermine the integrity of the competition process. In addition, appeals and grievances fuel the establishment of more rules and procedures in attempts to make the staffing system “appeal- and grievance-proof” rather than fair, efficient and effective.

**1.14** The staffing audits conducted by the Staffing Branch are inefficient and, with the exception of encouraging compliance, are ineffective. Follow-up is also needed to ensure that recommended improvements are made and that progress continues. Measures and indicators need to be developed for ongoing monitoring and periodic assessment of the staffing function to encourage continuous improvement in providing high-quality service to key stakeholders.

**1.15** In our opinion, there is room for substantial improvement. Staffing practices can be improved notably in areas such as human resource planning, recruitment and selection. Many specific examples and opportunities for improvement are identified in Section 4 of this report. These improvements should help to ensure that staffing decisions reflect the principles of merit, fairness and equity. More teamwork, co-ordination and sharing of information and of best practices between departments and the Public Service Commission are needed.

### Human Resource Information and Systems

**1.16** The objective of this project was to review the information and information systems supporting human resource management.

**1.17** The current human resource information systems are not adequate to support the needs of the Yukon Territorial Government. The systems are outdated, requiring extra staff and excessive paper flow. They have limited capabilities to provide the information needed for effective and efficient human resource management and for ongoing improvement.

**1.18** Departments have acquired or developed their own systems to support their human resource management needs. These systems are not integrated and do not provide adequate human resource information for government-wide planning and decision making.

**1.19** Poor systems have resulted in considerable additional costs and duplication of effort, with accumulated “hidden” or unidentified costs that, in our opinion, could well exceed the expense of making the necessary enhancements to the systems.

**1.20** Human resource information at the departmental and corporate levels is insufficient for efficient and effective management of people. Human resource reports produced by systems are often inaccurate and unreliable.

**1.21** There is a lack of leadership in the implementation of the Information Resource Management Strategic Plan. Direction and co-ordination in government-wide systems planning and development are also inadequate.

### Management-of-People Practices: Survey Results

**1.22** In addition to interviews conducted during our overall assessment and projects related to acquisition of staff and human resource information, we conducted a survey of some 120 YTG employees on some management practices related to empowerment, quality of direction/supervision and aspects of job satisfaction.

**1.23** Participants in the survey generally agreed that they have what they need to perform their work, except the ability to make changes as needed and access to equipment or training. A large number of participants agreed that they could make significant improvements to their work if they were provided with the proper means.

**1.24** Participants' responses to questions and follow-up discussions indicate clearly that the quality of direction and supervision they receive is a significant concern to many. Of particular concern is a perceived lack of emphasis on management skills, including skills in managing people, in selecting or promoting people to supervisory positions, and in providing adequate training in this area. Many employees surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with performance appraisals and the desire to provide feedback to their superiors through "upward feedback" mechanisms.

**1.25** Employees we surveyed are generally satisfied with many aspects of their work. It was evident that YTG employees are motivated and dedicated to their work and to providing high-quality service to Yukoners. Much of their frustration appears to be related to the perceived impediments to doing just that. Partly because of past experience with unsuccessful efforts to bring about change, many employees we surveyed are disillusioned and no longer believe that improvements can or will be made.

## LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

For ease of reference the paragraph number for each of the recommendations is the same here as in the detailed report.

**3.12** We believe that there is a need to revise the *Public Service Act* to:

- include “service to Yukoners” as its key purpose;
- recognize formally the critical role that departments play in the efficient and effective management of people and delivery of services, and to provide for corresponding devolution and delegation of authority;
- refocus the role of the Public Service Commission to:
  - make it a provider of human resource policies, programs and systems clearly designed to assist and to support departments to meet their program objectives and government policy objectives, such as ensuring that merit is the basis for appointment;
  - make it a provider of support, service and expertise to departments for the development of state-of-the-art management-of-people practices; and
  - establish a requirement for the PSC to monitor and report periodically on the performance of YTG in relation to human resource management;
- provide a sound accountability framework for the Commission and departments in terms of obligations in relation to human resource management and reporting mechanisms.

**3.15** There is a need to clarify the roles, responsibilities, authority and mandate of the Executive Council Office, the Management Board Secretariat and the boards of directors of corporations in relation to those of the Public Service Commission or, as the case may be, departments.

**3.26** For effective resource management to take place, there is a need to ensure that the philosophy of governance and the underpinning management philosophy are clarified and communicated effectively. Among other things, there is a need to clarify and communicate to and within departments:

- the vision of where YTG is going in the foreseeable future, and the reasons;
- the explicit guiding principles or values — including human resource management principles — that should apply in making decisions;
- the goals, objectives and priorities of the government — including those for human resource management;



- the current applicable human resource policies; and
- what constitutes a policy compared to a guideline or a procedure, and the obligations in relation to each.

**3.43** There is a need for the Executive Council Office to set up mechanisms to ensure that:

- human resource policies are developed and approved by Cabinet taking into consideration the needs and priorities of departments, as well as those of the Public Service Commission and other stakeholders, in a joint and genuinely interactive manner;
- the priorities of the human resource policy development agenda take into account the need for other policies and that, once the agenda is approved, it is communicated and periodically reviewed;
- there is improved co-ordination between policy development and expenditure management so that policy requirements are appropriately resourced and supported; and
- in collaboration with the Public Service Commission and the Management Board Secretariat and departments, a “YTG culture” and values are maintained and reinforced.

**3.44** Similarly, there is a need for the Management Board, assisted by the Secretariat, to set up structures and mechanisms to ensure that:

- systems development and other initiatives in human resource management are co-ordinated and integrated with systems development and initiatives in other areas, such as financial management or computer technology. This should be done taking into consideration the needs and priorities of the government and departments as well as those of the Public Service Commission and other stakeholders;
- the priorities for development of human resource systems and other initiatives are determined and approved taking into consideration the government’s financial situation;
- these priorities are communicated effectively and reviewed periodically;
- stakeholders have adequate input, consultation and genuine participation in the development of these systems and initiatives; and
- all costs — including hidden costs potentially incurred by departments in implementing or administering existing or proposed systems or initiatives — are adequately taken into consideration at the time of decision.

**3.54** There is a need to:

- align authority with responsibilities for human resource management; and
- provide for a commensurate devolution or delegation of authority to departments within an effective accountability framework.

**3.55** In delegating authority to or within departments, there is a need for central agencies, such as the Public Service Commission, or departments to ensure that:

- goals, objectives, expectations and standards of performance are established, agreed to and communicated to those exercising the delegated authority, and to other stakeholders;
- those to whom the authority is delegated are provided with the tools, training and information necessary for the proper exercise of that authority and for the improvement of their performance over time; and
- there is periodic feedback and accountability for performance.

**3.76** There is a need for the Executive Council Office and the Management Board to put in place mechanisms to ensure that the change process for improvement in human resource management is rigorously managed. More specifically, they must ensure that:

- the change initiatives are managed in a context of a global, integrated and planned strategy for continuous improvement;
- stakeholders have appropriate avenues for input, consultation and genuine participation in the analysis of problems and in the development of solutions. Such avenues could take the form of “councils for change”;
- goals are set, and performance monitored and assessed against the goals and corrective action taken where appropriate, to ensure that the goals will be achieved within a reasonable time;
- those charged with responsibility for assessing the need for a specific change, evaluating solutions or implementing the change have the necessary support and expertise and the authority to make the appropriate decisions;
- stakeholders are informed effectively throughout the process and about the decision, and understand the reasons for effecting or not effecting the proposed change; and
- managers and other stakeholders have information about, and opportunities to discuss, measures taken by other jurisdictions to bring about change in their public service.

**3.87** There is a need to ensure that:

- the proposed changes in human resource management focus on improvement in service delivery and thus capitalize on the commitment and dedication of YTG employees to provide high-quality service to Yukoners;
- mechanisms are in place to make the best use of the knowledge and skills of YTG employees in identifying areas for improvements and to involve them in developing appropriate solutions; and
- implicit and explicit incentives, recognition and rewards mechanisms are developed and put in place and are working properly to support the achievement of the desired results.

**4.13** There is a need for PSC to:

- simplify the staffing rules and process to reduce the administrative burden; and
- modify the employment categories.

**4.14** There is a need for PSC and departments to look for innovative ways to facilitate and improve the efficiency of the staffing process.

**4.20** There is a need for PSC to:

- focus on better quality of service;
- improve “client” relationships;
- work together with departments as partners toward common goals and objectives;
- explore innovative ways to balance its roles of control and service to departments; and
- obtain feedback on the quality of service from clients and key stakeholders, such as departments and applicants, through surveys and other means.

**4.30** There is a need for the *Public Service Act* to provide for an accountability framework, and for PSC, working in partnership with departments, to develop and implement an effective accountability framework for staffing that will ensure that principles are followed, standards met, and desired results achieved, while providing flexibility to departments through the delegation of authority for staffing positions.

**4.38** There is a need for PSC to:

- clarify staffing policies and distinguish among policies, guidelines and procedures;
- communicate them effectively to managers and staffing officers; and
- improve the training, guidance and support provided to departments for fair, efficient and effective staffing.

**4.42** There is a need for the PSC and departments to ensure that:

- adequate human resource information, such as appointment and turnover statistics, is available to enable managers to plan and identify staffing needs in advance; and
- adequate staffing plans are developed.

**4.46** There is a need for PSC and departments to review the statements of qualifications and position descriptions for consistency.

**4.49** There is a need for PSC to provide more guidelines for exemptions to ensure that the rationales used to justify appointment decisions are sound and substantiated and that the candidate meets all the requirements for the position to which he/she is proposed for appointment.

**4.54** There is a need for PSC and departments to seek cost-effective ways to recruit candidates for competitions, such as shared competitions by departments, government-wide competitions and central inventory lists for generic positions.

**4.57** There is a need for PSC, working in partnership with departments, to:

- ensure that the screening process is conducted properly; and
- provide further training and guidance on the screening process to personnel officers and departmental managers.

**4.61** There is a need for PSC and departments to develop broad principles of staffing, in the context of the government's overall human resource strategy.



**4.65** There is a need for PSC to:

- review and revise the interview guides to ensure that the interview is properly used in the selection process; and
- provide training and guidance on interviewing to personnel officers and departmental managers.

**4.66** There is a need for PSC and departments to:

- increase the use of testing as a tool for assessment where appropriate; and
- examine the timing of testing with a view to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the selection process.

**4.70** There is a need for PSC, in conjunction with departments, to:

- re-examine current practices in making reference checks; and
- provide training and guidance to personnel officers and departmental managers to improve their conduct of reference checks.

**4.74** There is a need for PSC and departments to:

- offer orientation to new employees on YTG and department objectives and operations; and
- provide on-the-job training to new employees.

**4.76** There is a need for PSC and departments to:

- effectively monitor the performance of probationary employees in a timely manner; and
- seek ways of enabling departmental managers to deal with unsuitable probationary employees.

**4.82** There is a need for PSC to:

- develop a comprehensive plan and methodology for auditing competitions, delegated and non-delegated, and to assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the staffing process in addition to compliance;
- consider alternative ways to conduct staffing audits to allow opportunities for training and collaboration among the PSC, the internal audit/management improvement function and the departments; and

- measure the success of staffing audits in value added through the implementation of cost-effective improvements to the staffing process.

**4.85** There is a need for PSC, working in partnership with departments, to develop performance measures or indicators for ongoing monitoring and periodic assessment of the staffing function in order to encourage continuous improvement.

**5.13** There is a need to improve significantly, or replace, the payroll system and the Employee Information and the Applicant Tracking Systems in order to provide adequate support for human resource management.

**5.18** There is a need to review these systems to avoid duplication and to ensure that, where appropriate, they are integrated to provide the information needed for overall human resource management.

**5.21** There is a need to:

- identify and evaluate the hidden costs of maintaining these inefficient information systems;
- encourage employees to find innovative ways to reduce time-wasting paperwork and processing;
- cultivate an attitude of cost-consciousness; and
- promote efficient and effective work methods in collecting and processing human resource management information.

**5.25** There is a need to:

- assess both corporate and departmental requirements for human resource data and information; and
- prepare a cost-benefit analysis on developing appropriate systems to meet these needs.

**5.32** There is an urgent need for effective leadership in the implementation of the Information Resource Management Strategic Plan in a manner consistent with YTG goals, objectives and priorities. There must be adequate direction and co-ordination of departmental and government-wide systems development and implementation for all resources, including human resources.

## Section 2

### INTRODUCTION





## Section 2

### INTRODUCTION

**2.1** Human resources are a key resource in any organization but especially in the public service. First, it is people who manage all other resources; it is through people that results are achieved. Second, because the public service is essentially 'people serving people', employees have a significant impact on program and service delivery. Taxpayers will often form an opinion about the effectiveness and efficiency of the public service based on their interactions with public servants. Finally, expenditures related to people represent a significant cost to most public service organizations. According to the YTG financial statements, human resources accounted for about \$137 million, or 36 percent of the \$379 million expenditures in 1991-92. Some officials estimate that another \$60 million are employee-driven expenditures, such as travel, training and relocation.

**2.2** The objective of our study was to review the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the human resource management framework, systems and management-of-people practices, and to make suggestions for improvement.

**2.3** The study was designed and executed to provide:

- an overall assessment of the adequacy of some elements of the framework for managing human resources, such as policies, division of roles and responsibilities, and review, control and evaluation mechanisms;

- a general assessment of all human resource management systems, with a more detailed examination of those related to the acquisition of staff, such as human resource planning, recruitment, selection and employee orientation;
- an assessment of the adequacy of the information systems and information supporting human resource management;
- a review of a number of management-of-people practices through an assessment of employees' perceptions about:
  - the quality of leadership, direction and supervision provided by their superiors;
  - the degree of empowerment, i.e., the extent to which employees perceived they had the information, tools, training and authority necessary to perform their tasks; and
  - the degree of satisfaction in relation to specific aspects of their work or the environment in which they perform it.

The chart on the next page illustrates the relationships among the key components of the study.

**2.4** The study was carried out in the Public Service Commission and in departments and, to the extent that they are involved in human resource management, in the Executive Council Office, the Management Board Secretariat and the Department of Finance.

**2.5** We carried out detailed examinations in four departments and one corporation where human resource management is governed by

The objective of our study was to review the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the human resource management framework, systems and management-of-people practices.

both the *Public Service Act* and the *Public Service Staff Relations Act*:

- Community and Transportation Services;
- Government Services;
- Health and Social Services;
- Education; and
- the Yukon Housing Corporation.

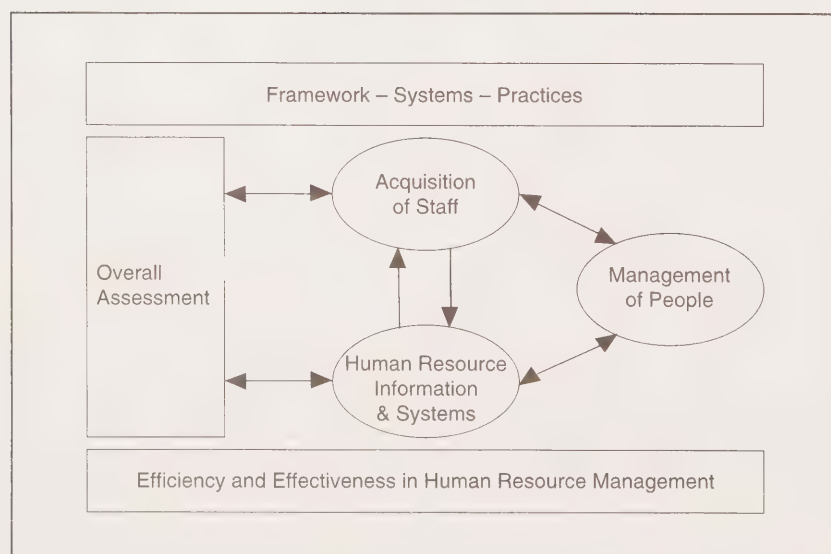
These five entities accounted for some 47 percent of all YTG employees, excluding teachers, as of April 1993.

**2.6** We excluded from the scope of the study human resource systems and practices related to teachers in the Department of Education. Teachers are hired under the *Yukon Education Act* and are subject to a separate collective agreement and working conditions different from those of other employees.

**2.7** In conducting the study, we carried out the following activities:

- a review of previous audit reports conducted by this Office, such as the audits of financial management and control in 1989 and 1990 and of information technology in 1990 and their follow-ups;
- a review of legislation, policies, directives, study reports and other documents such as collective agreements, minutes of committees, records of selected appeal decisions and internal audit reports;
- meetings with officials, including the Government Leader, deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers of central agencies and a number of departments, including the five entities where a more detailed examination was carried out;
- interviews and discussions with directors and officers of the Public Service Commission, and with middle managers and personnel administrators in departments;
- a detailed examination of a sample of staffing actions for various categories of personnel, representative of staffing activities in each of the entities selected;
- a review of information systems and information processing related to human resource management, such as payroll, leave administration and employee information; and
- a survey and discussions with some 120 supervisory and non-supervisory personnel in Whitehorse, Watson Lake and Dawson City, to supplement the perceptions gathered during our general assessment and our

## Overview of Study



detailed examination of systems and practices related to the acquisition of staff, and of human resource information and systems.

**2.8** We had intended to meet with representatives of bargaining units but did not, because collective bargaining was under way.



## Section 3

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS





## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

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## Section 3

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

#### Legislative and Administrative Framework No Longer Adequate

**3.1** The time when governing the Yukon was a function of the federal government is long past. Changes over the years, brought about by the introduction of responsible government, party politics, new programs and the devolution of federal programs, have led to a substantial increase in the size and complexity of YTG. Here are some examples:

- transfer of the Alaska Highway and of Arctic airports;
- decentralization of activities from Whitehorse to local communities;
- opening of the new Continuing Care Facility in 1993;
- settling of land claims and the negotiations with First Nations concerning self-government.

**3.2** In our opinion, the increase in size and complexity of YTG has had several effects:

- A strong departmental perspective and culture have developed; at the same time, there has been a gradual weakening of a YTG or “corporate” perspective. For example, policy development, which was done centrally years ago, is now mostly performed at the departmental level.

- Departments have specialized and have thus developed some unique characteristics. For example, the Department of Education works under constraints imposed by a 10-month school year, different from the fiscal year of the YTG. The Department of Community and Transportation Services deals with a short summer season and unpredictable weather for highway construction and repair, much of it done in remote locations.

- Central agencies and senior departmental management have focused their time, resources and attention on programs and their delivery, often at the expense of human resource systems, practices and related administrative matters. As a result, many systems and practices have not evolved as planned, have outlived their usefulness, and now need to be significantly upgraded or fundamentally reviewed. For example, the software used by departments for the administration of leave was developed for departments with a relatively small number of employees. The payroll system is, by and large, a cheque-writing machine with no capability for computation or automatic calculation of salary adjustments.

- It has been increasingly difficult for the Public Service Commission to carry out its activities centrally, to know what is happening in departments and agencies, and to control compliance with policies.

Changes introduced over the years have led to a substantial increase in the size and complexity of YTG.

Central agencies and senior management have focused their time, resources and attention on programs and their delivery, often at the expense of human resource systems and practices and related administrative matters.

Few managers we interviewed or surveyed feel any “ownership” of human resource policies and systems developed by the Public Service Commission. Often, they do not understand them well.

- Faced with growing workloads, pressures from departments for service, and limited resources, the Public Service Commission and other central agencies have “delegated” some of their responsibilities to departments.
- New, adaptive and innovative human resource management approaches are necessary. For example, how can restrictions on acting pay be reconciled with the necessity of seconding people to ad hoc task forces or working groups for unpredictable lengths of time? The opening of the Continuing Care Facility provides an example of the need to adapt. It will create a number of new positions calling for specialized knowledge and skills. It will also necessitate, however, adjustments to the human resource profile of the Whitehorse General Hospital and Macaulay Lodge, which have provided continuing care in the past.

**3.3** The increase in size and complexity has also affected human resource policies, systems and practices. Important human resource problems and new issues have emerged, such as collective bargaining for auxiliary personnel, redress mechanisms such as appeals, the employment equity and sexual harassment policies, and jurisprudence. They have generated a significant increase in the number of human resource policies, programs, rules and procedures. In our opinion, this situation has also had several significant effects:

- More time and resources are needed to deal with these issues. A heavier administrative burden has been imposed on the Public

Service Commission and on departments.

- Departments have found themselves with the responsibility for implementing new human resource policies, programs, rules and procedures and for exercising the authority delegated by the PSC and other central agencies, often without the specialized support or the resources this requires, notably because of ongoing fiscal restraint. An example is the transfer of responsibility from the PSC to departments for paying relocation costs of newly hired employees, without the corresponding transfer of dollars. Another example is the transfer from Government Services to departments of the responsibility — and cost — for providing computer training to employees, without the corresponding transfer of the resources previously used for this purpose.
- Managers either have abdicated their responsibilities for human resource management or have had to rely heavily on functional specialists in areas like labour relations, classification and staffing before making any decisions about people. Some have given up trying to understand the “system”. Furthermore, few managers we interviewed or surveyed feel any “ownership” of the human resource policies and systems developed by the Public Service Commission. Often, they do not understand them well. This is evidenced by the confusion we observed about some policies, and the various pervasive myths about staffing procedures that this report describes.



- Managers with additional responsibilities for delivering programs to Yukoners but with proportionately fewer resources — including fewer people — now find it increasingly difficult to apply and follow rules that have been established without significant input from them, over which they have no control, and that are not tailored to the needs of their departments or the programs they are managing. And the rules impose significant administrative costs and delays.

**3.4** In our opinion, the current legislative and administrative framework, as described in Appendix A, fails to recognize that it is at the department level where “people serve people” and human resource management really takes place. Departments are also where the effects of the Public Service Commission’s human resource policies and systems are most often felt and where some of the most significant costs are incurred, though they are often hidden or ignored.

**3.5** Partly because of the specific wording of the *Public Service Act* and because of its underlying philosophy of management, the Commission has tried in the past to exercise a centralized and detailed control over the personnel activities of departments. Our interviews with PSC personnel revealed significant frustration with departmental behaviour and what were considered “deviations from the norm”, as illustrated by the measures taken by departments to circumvent the establishment control system, the results of the PSC audit of delegated staffing, and numerous other examples. Given the evolution and diversity of the YTG, there is growing evidence that central and detailed controls no longer work well.

**3.6** We observed that significant tension has developed between the PSC and departments and, to a lesser extent, between line managers and personnel officers in departments.

**3.7** On the one hand, departmental managers feel that the PSC and, in some cases, their own personnel people do not understand or sufficiently appreciate their situation — or worse, that they do not care, as demonstrated by the perceived lack of support for implementing government policies or achieving program objectives. Many departmental managers interviewed or surveyed now believe that the PSC and other central agencies, their rules and, more important, the “one shoe fits all” culture are now major impediments to their ability to:

- do “more with less”;
- manage their human resources with due regard to economy and efficiency; and
- most important, deliver their programs to the people of the Yukon efficiently and effectively.

**3.8** On the other hand, PSC officials and departmental personnel officers feel that their situation is not appreciated by line managers. They perceive that, in some instances, managers act in bad faith, do not take responsibility, or even consciously violate or by-pass government policy. Caught in the middle, PSC employees and personnel officers in departments try to find the delicate balance between control and service.

**3.9** In our opinion, the current legislative and administrative framework clearly dissociates responsibility from authority, for both human resource management and program delivery. Furthermore, there

The current legislative and administrative framework fails to recognize that it is at the department level where “people serve people” and human resource management really takes place.

Under the current regime, we believe that neither the PSC nor departments can be held to account for results.

are no effective accountability mechanisms in place, such as an obligation for departments or the PSC to report to the Legislative Assembly on performance in relation to human resource management. Under the current regime, we believe that neither the PSC nor departments can be held to account for results.

**3.10** Ongoing fiscal restraint has, however, made the government, central agencies, managers and many employees in departments more aware of the cost, if not of the importance, of good human resource management practices and systems, and of the need to ensure that they are efficient and effective. There is a widespread belief among people interviewed or surveyed that significant changes are needed because the personnel system is bursting at the seams. We share that belief.

### Exhibit 3.1

#### Putting “Service” in the *Public Service Act*: the British Columbia and Quebec Examples

The Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service of British Columbia recommended changes to the B.C. *Public Service Act*. One of the most interesting features is the inclusion of a preamble establishing the purposes of the (proposed) Act. The purposes of the (draft) Act are to:

- a. facilitate the provision of service to the public in a manner that is responsive to changing public requirements;
- b. recruit and develop a well qualified and efficient public service, representative of the diversity of the people of B.C.;
- c. encourage the training and development of employees to foster career development and advancement;
- d. encourage creativity and initiative among employees;
- e. promote harmonious relations with the government and employees within the public service.

A similar preamble was incorporated into the Quebec *Public Service Act* in 1984:

- s.2 The public service has for its mission the provision of quality services to which the public is entitled.
- s.3 The purpose of this Act is to permit the accomplishment of this mission. To this end, the Act creates a framework for human resource management aimed at fostering:
  1. the efficiency of the public service as well as the optimum utilization and development of human resources;
  2. the exercise of authority in relation to human resource management at the lowest level possible and the establishment of an accountability regime....;
  3. Equality of access of all citizens to the public service;...

Sources: Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector, British Columbia, Volume 1 *Final Report*, June 1993. The Quebec *Public Service Act*, *Quebec Statutes*, Chapter F-3.1.1.

**3.11** We found that jurisdictions like Quebec and British Columbia have bridged the gap between the requirement for efficient service to the public and the requirements for effective human resource management, notably by making “service to the public” a clear focus of their legislation governing the management of people. Exhibit 3.1 provides further details.

**3.12** We believe that there is a need to revise the *Public Service Act* to:

- include “service to Yukoners” as its key purpose;
- recognize formally the critical role that departments play in the efficient and effective management of people and delivery of services, and to provide for corresponding devolution and delegation of authority;
- refocus the role of the Public Service Commission to:
  - make it a provider of human resource policies, programs and systems clearly designed to assist and to support departments to meet their program objectives and government policy objectives, such as ensuring that merit is the basis for appointment;
  - make it a provider of support, service and expertise to departments for the development of state-of-the-art management-of-people practices; and
  - establish a requirement for the PSC to monitor and report periodically on the performance of YTG in relation to human resource management;

- **provide a sound accountability framework for the Commission and departments in terms of obligations in relation to human resource management and reporting mechanisms.**

**3.13** Our examination leads us to believe that other ambiguities also need to be corrected. For example, under the *Financial Administration Act*, the Management Board is responsible for co-ordinating the efficient and effective use of all financial and human resources of the government; but the Public Service Commission also has the power under the *Public Service Act* to develop, maintain, administer and supervise a competent and efficient public service. It is not clear which of the Public Service Commission, the Executive Council Office or the Management Board Secretariat can or should assume the leadership role for ensuring the harmonious and efficient development of YTG as an organization.

**3.14** Similarly, there is confusion between the powers of boards of directors of corporations and those of the Commission pursuant to the *Public Service Act*. For example, section 5 of the *Housing Corporation Act* permits its Board to appoint employees and fix salaries. Another section (5(2)) states that employees appointed by the Board are subject to the terms and conditions of employment applicable to the public service. The *Public Service Act* stipulates that the PSC has the power to make appointments to, or from within, the public service; the Yukon Housing Corporation is listed as a department under the *Financial Administration Act*.

**3.15** **There is a need to clarify the roles, responsibilities, authority and**

**mandate of the Executive Council Office, the Management Board Secretariat and the boards of directors of corporations in relation to those of the Public Service Commission or, as the case may be, departments.**

## **Inadequate Leadership at the Central Agency and Departmental Levels**

### **Leadership and direction from central agencies**

**3.16** Leadership, especially providing clear direction, is essential to organizational effectiveness. To be able to make an effective contribution, central agencies, departments and employees need to have and share a vision of what YTG should be and do to meet current and future challenges. They also need to know, understand and commit to the goals and objectives that will lead the organization to become what is envisioned.

**3.17** The election of a new government in October 1992 is perceived by many Yukon public servants as having brought more than nominal change. Meetings with employees revealed that they perceive the change of government as a significant change in philosophy, direction, policies and priorities.

**3.18** We found that there is a significant amount of insecurity, uncertainty and confusion among employees we interviewed or surveyed about the nature, extent and impact of these changes. For example, there were perceptions of ambiguity about the government's stated intention to "let the manager manage" at the same time that it was establishing and maintaining controls such as ministerial approval of travel

Leadership, especially providing clear direction, is essential to organizational effectiveness.



or Management Board review of staffing requests.

**3.19** There was general agreement at the central agency and departmental levels that, in light of the trends described earlier and of ongoing fiscal restraint, there should be a serious re-examination of some of the operating premises and past practices of the YTG. However, there has not been a clear enunciation of the philosophy of governance and the underpinning management philosophy, or any consensus on what it should be to meet the challenges that the future holds. Effective resource management — including human resource management — cannot take place unless stronger and clearer direction is provided.

**3.20** We have observed a lack of vision and of common YTG goals and objectives for human resource management. Although the PSC has developed a Human Resource Strategic Plan, there is no clear link between this plan and the vision for YTG. Furthermore, the plan was not developed with sufficient consultation and input from departments; commitment and agreement of departments — including deputy ministers — to this plan has not been sought. The plan was submitted to Management Board but was not formally approved. In our opinion, the lack of a vision and of common goals for human resource management has contributed to unnecessary tension between departments and the PSC and other central agencies.

**3.21** Policies are one way that governments provide direction. We found that there are many unclear YTG human resource policies. For example, the Yukon and the local community preference hiring policies are believed to be official by

managers and staffing officers, but they are unwritten and have never been formally defined. Managers and staffing officers are often left to interpret the policies themselves and to decide how to apply them.

**3.22** Government priorities for human resource management are not clear either. Many of the issues and questions raised by managers and other employees in our interviews concerned the validity of a number of policies, including the priority that they should be given.

**3.23** For example, the decision to adopt Yukon and local community preference hiring policies was based partly on the premise that greater decentralization of government services in local communities of the Yukon would improve participation and representation of the population. Training opportunities were to be created so that candidates from a local community who did not fully meet the requirements of a position could achieve the necessary level of proficiency over time. Some managers expressed the view that decentralization, the Yukon and local community preference hiring policies, and the training policy should perhaps be revisited, put on hold, or even abandoned in light of other important government objectives, such as reducing expenditures and downsizing, or settling land claims and negotiating self-government agreements with First Nations. They believe that, in light of ongoing fiscal constraint, decisions should be more cost-effective. Positions should be located where most appropriate and staffed with the most qualified person. Departmental managers said that it was far from clear in their minds what their priorities should be when they have to make choices.

We found that there are many unclear YTG human resource policies.

**3.24** There is also a need for clearer distinction between policies and procedures and guidelines. In our examination of staffing practices we found that there was often confusion about what constitutes government policy, guidelines and procedures, and the obligations in relation to the latter two. The confusion often leads managers and employees to make more rigid interpretations than necessary. For example, it is not clear whether the hiring preference policies require a local competition or one restricted to Yukoners before opening it to “outsiders”, or whether it is permissible to have one competition only, as long as the hiring preferences are respected. Such ambiguity leads to inconsistent application and, in some cases, has contributed significantly to delays or additional costs. This is particularly true when the Commission or departments conduct sequential competitions for a position, even when there is little or no evidence that there are enough potentially qualified candidates, such as engineers and computer specialists, in the Yukon.

**3.25** At the time of our examination there was no up-to-date manual of human resource management policies, and a number of personnel policies were being redeveloped.

**3.26** For effective resource management to take place, there is a need to ensure that the philosophy of governance and the underpinning management philosophy are clarified and communicated effectively. Among other things, there is a need to clarify and communicate to and within departments:

- the vision of where YTG is going in the foreseeable future, and the reasons;
- the explicit guiding principles or values — including human

**resource management principles — that should apply in making decisions;**

- the goals, objectives and priorities of the government — including those for human resource management;
- the current applicable human resource policies; and
- what constitutes a policy compared to a guideline or a procedure, and the obligations in relation to each.

### **Direction and supervision in departments**

**3.27** Although we did not make a thorough review of departmental practices, our interviews and the results of our survey indicate concerns of many about the quality of direction and supervision at the departmental level. For example, less than 55 percent of the respondents to our questionnaire agreed with the statement that they knew the goals and objectives of their work unit, let alone the goals and objectives of their department. Although more than 75 percent of respondents claimed to have a knowledge of priorities, there was consensus that the predominant management style in departments or work units was “crisis management”. To many, there often was no apparent link between priorities, and goals and objectives.

### **Absence of Mechanisms to Co-ordinate the Development of Effective Human Resource Policies, Systems and Practices**

**3.28** There are many stakeholders with an interest in human resource management in YTG. Employees, unions, managers, deputy ministers, the Public Service Commission, the government and, indeed, all Yukoners



The evidence gathered during our study supports the view that the Commission does not always give sufficient consideration to the needs, concerns and characteristics of departments.

have important, though different, interests and expectations when it comes to human resource management in YTG.

### **Insufficient consideration of departmental concerns**

**3.29** Successful development of policies, systems or solutions to problems requires that stakeholders with an interest participate in the process or, as a minimum, that their interests be considered, and be perceived to have been considered, seriously and fairly. Otherwise, there is likely to be strong opposition or resistance to any change.

**3.30** Departments have a key role in human resource management. For example, departmental officials have daily and continuous relations with employees, assigning tasks and providing them with direction, information, and on-the-job and department-based training. They also assess and provide feedback on employees' performance. It is at the departmental level that people receive recognition and are rewarded for their contribution. This is where human resource policies and programs — including collective agreements — must be implemented, applied and made to work. It is also at the departmental level that principles such as fairness and equity are applied in day-to-day decisions. Finally, it is in departments that much of personnel administration, such as writing job descriptions and keeping track of and recording leave, takes place. For these reasons, we expected departments to have a significant say in the development of YTG human resource policies, systems and practices.

**3.31** The evidence gathered during our study supports the view that the Commission does not always give sufficient consideration to the needs, concerns and characteristics of

departments. For example, departmental officials expressed the view that the priorities the Public Service Commission gives to certain policies or systems — such as the security clearance policy or the Applicant Tracking System — do not reflect their own priorities. Moreover, their concerns about the need to address department-based training and for a YTG leave-administration system had not yet been addressed.

**3.32** Although there are notable instances where the PSC has sought extensive participation and input from departments — such as the development of the policies on employment equity and sexual harassment — human resource policy and systems development projects often tend to be identified by the Commission's specialists, rather than by departments who need them and will have to implement them and make them work, often without additional resources.

**3.33** Although departments may be consulted about a policy or a systems development proposal, they are not asked about their own priorities or about their choices among PSC priorities, given their own resource constraints. Where consultation takes place, departmental managers thought that often it comes late in the process, making it difficult for them to ensure that their specific needs and concerns are taken into consideration. Furthermore, because the Public Service Commission drives the consultation process, it is difficult for departments to criticize, let alone oppose, a proposed policy. Even when they do, they have little assurance that their concerns, including the administrative burden and cost of implementing the proposed policy, will be objectively relayed by the Commission to the Management Board or Cabinet when the decisions are made.

**3.34** For example, although the Commission consults with departments to identify overall training needs, and on the training it proposes to offer, consultations are not structured to obtain commitment and ownership among senior officials in departments. Furthermore, to our knowledge, the PSC has not made representations to the Management Board or Cabinet about the need for more department-based training or the lack of departmental training funds for that purpose. As a result, there are perceptions in departments and among employees we surveyed that the Commission gives priority to training that may be useful but not essential when compared with departmental training needs. The lack of access to training, particularly department-based training, was one of the most consistent messages coming out of our survey on management-of-people practices.

**3.35** We found that interdepartmental committees have not always been used effectively for input, consultation, participation or decision making. Although there are a number of committees such as the Deputy Ministers' Review Committee (DMRC), the Departmental Administrators' Liaison Committee (DALC), and the Personnel Committee, their roles in policy or systems development and problem solving are not clearly defined or well understood. Furthermore, none of these committees has any decision-making authority. For example, although deputy heads at a DMRC retreat expressed serious concerns about human resource management and the need to simplify staffing procedures, there has been no subsequent feedback or discussion with members of that committee about the Commission's plans to address

those concerns or to inform deputy heads of any progress. Some deputies we interviewed expressed disappointment in this perceived lack of action; they see it as additional evidence that the Commission is not responsive to their concerns. Some perceive the Commission as "rowing in a different direction".

**3.36** There is not always sufficient recognition and appreciation of the administrative burden and costs imposed on departments by central agency policies and systems. Many departments consider that central agencies in general — and the Commission in particular — often lack a full appreciation of departmental financial constraints. Our report on information systems provides illustrations of the administrative burden imposed on departments. Exhibit 3.2 provides

Existing interdepartmental committees have not always been used effectively for input, consultation, participation or decision making.

Exhibit 3.2

**Examples of Questions to Address When Considering a New Central Agency Policy from a Departmental Perspective**

- Will this policy help deliver programs in the most effective way?
- Will the policy meet an over-riding government-wide objective in the most cost-effective manner?
- Have all costs been considered — including all departmental costs of implementing and administering the policy?
- Can the policy be achieved through other means such as providing incentives or guidelines rather than directives or pre-transaction approvals?
- Does the policy make sense to managers and employees in departments? Does the policy's wording make it "natural" for managers and employees to follow it?
- Does the cost of control exceed the value of what is being protected or the benefit achieved?
- Does the policy encourage maximum use of judgment by managers and employees about the means they use to achieve the desired results?
- Does the policy promote continuous improvement and innovation?

Source: Adapted from *Getting the Incentives Right: Towards a productivity oriented management framework for the Public Service*, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, February 22, 1993.

There is not always sufficient recognition and appreciation of the administrative burden and costs imposed on departments by central agency policies and systems.

There is a need for a stronger corporate or YTG vision, culture and mechanisms to pull people together and examine human resource problems outside the narrow perspectives of departments or human resource specialists.

examples of questions that should be addressed in considering a new human resource policy.

**3.37** Departments, managers and employees are likely to be more supportive of the PSC's policies and systems if they see that, in turn, the Commission is sensitive to their concerns and priorities and acts accordingly. Departments will resist implementing a policy if they have had little or no input, if their concerns about the policy are not considered adequately, and if they are not given the resources needed to implement the policy or more flexibility to reallocate their resources.

### **Need for a stronger YTG or "corporate" culture**

**3.38** Senior managers we interviewed expressed the view that, over the years, the YTG has become a variety of "solitudes", and that there is a need for a much stronger corporate or YTG vision, culture and mechanisms to pull people together and examine human resource problems outside the narrow perspectives of departments or human resource specialists. Our interviews with senior managers and our survey of employees indicate that there are strong perceptions of isolation and competition for attention and resources, rather than teamwork and a focus on achieving common goals and objectives.

**3.39** One of the effects of these "solitudes" is that a number of departments have started to develop

their own human resource systems and other mechanisms to meet their specific needs. This is evidenced by the variety of information systems developed to record leave, and the departmental appraisal processes and forms developed to replace the Commission's. Departments also maintain varying amounts of information on employees, although, officially, employee files are kept by the Commission at the YTG main building in Whitehorse. The existence of departmental systems may make it more difficult to implement a government-wide system in the future.

**3.40** In our opinion, the delicate question of respective roles and responsibilities cannot be resolved simply by clarifying who should have what responsibilities and authorities in human resource management. The issue is not whether to centralize or decentralize human resource management. What is necessary is that the PSC and departments recognize that each has a key role to play. A better balance and improved working relationships are required. Furthermore, all must recognize that human resource management cannot be dissociated from governance and the management of other resources.

**3.41** Once the philosophy of governance has been clarified and enunciated, it is the responsibility of central agencies, such as the Management Board Secretariat and the Public Service Commission, and departments to ensure that the allocation of resources and the development of financial,



administrative and human resource systems and practices are congruent and integrated. They must consistently support the realization of the vision and the achievement of the goals and objectives set.

**3.42** A balance cannot be achieved unless Cabinet, through the Executive Council Office, and the Management Board, through the Secretariat, provide the necessary leadership and co-ordination to ensure that, in decisions about human resource policies or systems, the departmental needs for adaptation, flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness are considered along with YTG “corporate needs” for consistency, compliance, and other principles, such as fairness, transparency and equity. There is a need for a much improved partnership among central agencies, departments and other stakeholders. Exhibit 3.3 illustrates some of the mechanisms that could be useful in reinforcing a YTG or “corporate” culture.

**3.43** There is a need for the Executive Council Office to set up mechanisms to ensure that:

- human resource policies are developed and approved by Cabinet taking into consideration the needs and priorities of departments, as well as those of the Public Service Commission and other stakeholders, in a joint and genuinely interactive manner;
- the priorities of the human resource policy development agenda take into account the need for other policies and that, once the agenda is approved, it is communicated and periodically reviewed;
- there is improved co-ordination between policy development and expenditure management so that

policy requirements are appropriately resourced and supported; and

- in collaboration with the Public Service Commission and the Management Board Secretariat and departments, a “YTG culture” and values are maintained and reinforced.

**3.44** Similarly, there is a need for the Management Board, assisted by the Secretariat, to set up structures and mechanisms to ensure that:

- systems development and other initiatives in human resource management are co-ordinated and integrated with systems development and initiatives in other areas, such as financial management or computer technology. This should be done taking into consideration the needs and priorities of the government and departments as well as those of the Public Service Commission and other stakeholders;

Exhibit 3.3

**Examples of Mechanisms to Reinforce a “Corporate” Culture**

- An orientation program to YTG for senior management or for new employees
- Evaluation of knowledge of YTG goals, objectives and priorities in the promotion process for certain positions, where appropriate
- Active participation or input by central agencies in the selection and promotion and performance evaluation of senior departmental officials, and vice versa
- Consideration of participation in interdepartmental committees and other “corporate” activities in the evaluation of managers’ performance
- Evaluation of the performance of managers in meeting YTG goals and objectives, in addition to departmental objectives
- Consideration of working experience in central agencies, or in more than one department, in the promotion of senior managers
- Creation of regional councils in locations outside Whitehorse
- Periodic secondments or rotation of departmental personnel to central agencies, and of central agency personnel to departments
- Creation of ad hoc task forces or problem-solving groups
- Periodic seminars on YTG issues overlapping several departments

Delegation of authority from the Commission to departments is not only limited in scope but is more a decentralization or “dumping” of central agency activities than a real empowerment of departments.

- the priorities for development of human resource systems and other initiatives are determined and approved taking into consideration the government’s financial situation;
- these priorities are communicated effectively and reviewed periodically;
- stakeholders have adequate input, consultation and genuine participation in the development of these systems and initiatives; and
- all costs — including hidden costs potentially incurred by departments in implementing or administering existing or proposed systems or initiatives — are adequately taken into consideration at the time of decision.

### Departments and employees not “enabled” or empowered to make decisions

There is no framework for the delegation of authority and the delegation of authority is not supported adequately.

**3.45 Delegation of authority from central agencies to departments.** Deputy heads have been delegated powers by the PSC for staffing some positions and for leave administration. In our opinion, the delegation of authority from the Commission to departments is not only limited in scope but is more a decentralization or “dumping” of central agency activities than a real empowerment of departments.

**3.46** For example, the Commission still retains a significant role in delegated staffing processes, through supervision, pre-approval of advertisements and statements of qualifications, and provision of specialized expertise. This influence is even more significant if one takes into consideration the role of the

Commission in other processes closely related to staffing, such as the classification of positions and the approval of proposed exemptions. In fact, departments have very little flexibility to make decisions about staffing. Furthermore, the delegation to departments of authority for interdepartmental or open competitions was challenged successfully in an appeal of an appointment made by a department through open competition. The arbitrator concluded that the PSC cannot delegate this authority because of the specific wording in the *Public Service Act*.

**3.47** There is no framework for the delegation of authority to or within departments, and the delegation of authority is not supported adequately. For example, in the delegation of staffing authority, the delegation instrument makes no mention of expectations and standards of performance that departments have to meet. Furthermore, there is no support or guidance provided in the form of manuals, training and information to assist departments in the proper exercise of that authority. For example, training required to chair selection boards has not been available since 1991, though it is a requirement for the sub-delegation of staffing authority within departments. Sections 4 and 5 of this report, on the acquisition of staff and on human resource information and information systems, provide additional details.

**3.48** Some deputy ministers and other managers we interviewed or surveyed believe that, if they are to be held accountable for managing programs with limited resources, they should have more input and a greater degree of control over human resources allocated to them, in order to make better decisions. People are



the most costly and most important of these resources, yet they are perceived as the resource over which managers have least influence, let alone control. This brings into question the degree of autonomy, flexibility and authority that departments should have in managing human resources, and the best way to frame and support the delegation of that authority.

**3.49** In our opinion, there is a need to align authority with responsibility for human resource management and to ensure that it is properly supported with direction, training, tools, guidance and information, for improvement of performance over time and for effective accountability.

**3.50 Empowerment of managers and employees in departments.** Our interviews and the results of our survey revealed that many managers and employees do not feel empowered. For example, participants in our survey mentioned that equipment such as computers or computer software was not available, or that there were long delays in obtaining them. Employees in locations outside Whitehorse mentioned not being allowed to have equipment repaired in their communities, even if there was a capability there and even if, in their opinion, it would be most cost-effective to do so.

**3.51** Although the vast majority of participants in our survey agreed that they could make decisions about how best to do their work, only 55 percent of those surveyed agreed they could make changes in their work if they saw something that did not make sense. Furthermore, more than 70 percent of the participants agreed that they could significantly improve the way they do their work, given the proper means.

**3.52** Training in an era of rapid and important technological change can be critical to minimizing time lost getting to know and understand the technology and to achieving proficiency. Yet fewer than 36 percent of participants agreed that they have easy access to the training needed to do their work in the most appropriate way; many commented that they have no access to training, especially to computer training.

**3.53** In spite of the fact that members of the Departmental Administrators' Liaison Committee (DALC) are aware, because of the nature of their responsibilities, of a significant number of human resource and administrative problems, many felt powerless, or were under the impression that nobody was really interested in listening to their concerns. Many believed they were wasting valuable time. Attendance at DALC has been poor, at times not even enough for a quorum. Our review of the committee's minutes and our discussions with members of DALC show that few tangible results have been produced.

**3.54 There is a need to:**

- align authority with responsibilities for human resource management; and
- provide for a commensurate devolution or delegation of authority to departments within an effective accountability framework.

**3.55 In delegating authority to or within departments, there is a need for central agencies, such as the Public Service Commission, or departments to ensure that:**

- goals, objectives, expectations and standards of performance are established, agreed to and

Our meetings and discussions with employees revealed that many departmental managers and employees do not feel empowered.

A significant number of reports and studies conducted by the Commission or consultants over the years resulted in little or no action, often without feedback even to participants.

Inaction and lack of feedback have had serious effects on the morale and the attitudes of managers and other employees.

**communicated to those exercising the delegated authority and to other stakeholders;**

- **those to whom the authority is delegated are provided with the tools, training and information necessary for the proper exercise of that authority and for the improvement of their performance over time; and**
- **there is periodic feedback and accountability for performance.**

### **Absence of a Performance Management Culture as Evidenced by the Absence of a Rigorously Managed Change Process**

#### **Progress takes excessive time**

**3.56** Although YTG is a relatively small organization, change seems to take an excessive amount of time. We found that a significant number of reports and studies conducted by the Commission or consultants over the years resulted in little or no action, often without feedback even to participants. For example, the development of the human resource strategic plan in response to concerns expressed by deputy heads in 1991 had not, by the conclusion of our study, been discussed with them or approved by Management Board.

**3.57** Another case of little action is the study of staffing practices submitted to the PSC by the Departmental Administrators Liaison Committee (DALC). A detailed report containing many recommendations was issued in 1991. None of the recommendations was ever implemented, in spite of the fact that some were acceptable to union leaders. No copy of the report was

distributed, no feedback was given to participants in the study and no explanations were given for “shelving” the report. Many of the concerns that we have raised were in that report.

**3.58** Apart from not solving the problems that were identified, the inaction and lack of feedback have had serious effects on the morale and the attitudes of managers and other employees. For example, they have raised the level of scepticism and cynicism to the point of disbelief or apathy in response to declarations that changes will be made. Because they have often been disappointed, many people we surveyed no longer believe that meaningful change is possible or will occur.

**3.59** The question that participants in our survey asked us most often was whether we believed our study would change anything and, if so, why. Only when members of the study team were able to convince people that the Auditor General’s Office makes its reports public and that participants in our survey will be informed when the report is tabled were we able to elicit their collaboration and active participation.

**3.60** Bringing about change is always difficult. Unless the change process is well managed, it is likely that resistance and time will overtake it, and the desired change will not take place. Implementing substantial change in the YTG is even more difficult because of the current political situation. There is a natural concern that substantial change will not occur or will not last long. In such circumstances, the challenge is to demonstrate and convince people that change is needed and inevitable, and to involve them in the change process. Once the decision has been made to bring about change, the

change process must be managed rigorously. In our opinion, change in YTG has not been rigorously managed.

### **Change has not been rigorously managed**

**3.61** In our opinion, two of the reasons why change has been slow are that improvements in human resource management have not been linked with improvements in program delivery, and administrative matters have not been given sufficiently high priority by central agencies and departments.

**3.62** Administration can be compared to a car. You use it to go to various places to conduct your business. If the car is to provide good service, it must meet your needs and be properly maintained. Failure to ensure that it meets your needs or to provide regular maintenance will lead to breakdowns with increased frequency. These breakdowns will take more and more of your time and money. Your ability to conduct your business will suffer. At some point, you will have to face the inevitable: the car cannot be repaired or the repairs are too expensive. In our opinion, human resource management must be given a higher priority by central agencies and departments because, unless there are improvements, program delivery will suffer more and more and it will be more difficult and costly to manage.

**3.63** Another reason why change has not been managed rigorously is because a performance management culture has not yet emerged in YTG. For example, in its 1989 and 1990 Reports on Other Matters to the Legislative Assembly, this Office noted that performance was not measured systematically, except for outputs. A follow-up to these audits,

included in the Report on Other Matters in 1992, demonstrated that little progress has been made. To a large extent, human resource management suffers from many of the same weaknesses.

**3.64** We found that efforts to renew human resource management systems and practices were not evidently part of a global strategy, linked to goals, results and improvements to be achieved over time. Rather, they were sporadic and piecemeal and, in our opinion, more responsive to excessive levels of frustration than to a planned effort to improve.

**3.65** Planning for human resource management appears to be limited to budgeting and to employment equity. In our examination of staffing practices we found little planning at the Commission or in departments to recruit or staff positions. Section 4 of this report, on the acquisition of staff, provides additional details on deficiencies observed in relation to human resource planning.

**3.66** As mentioned earlier, there are no common goals and objectives for human resource management at the central agency or departmental levels. Performance indicators are limited to outputs produced or activities carried out. For example, there are no performance indicators to determine or evaluate whether staffing is meritorious, or is becoming more efficient and effective over time. Proper performance indicators, developed in collaboration with stakeholders, would enhance accountability and could also provide a better indication of progress. In the absence of meaningful information, it is difficult to determine improvement. Exhibit 3.4 illustrates some of the performance indicators that could be considered for the staffing function,

Bringing about change is always difficult. Unless the change process is well managed, it is likely that resistance and time will overtake it, and the desired change will not take place.

Efforts to renew human resource management systems and practices are not evidently part of a global strategy, linked to goals, results and improvements to be achieved over time.



Formal mechanisms for performance appraisal are not in place, are perceived as inadequate or are not working well.

to determine whether it is deteriorating or improving over time.

**3.67** Formal mechanisms for performance appraisal are not in place, are perceived as inadequate or are not working well. For example, there is no effective formal performance appraisal of deputy ministers. At the conclusion of our study, a committee of deputy ministers was developing a performance management system for deputy heads.

### Exhibit 3.4

#### Toward a Performance Culture: Examples of Performance Indicators that Could Be Used for Staffing

The Public Service Commission and departments provide little information to the Legislative Assembly in the Main Estimates about results achieved. Indicators are often limited to estimates of activity levels.

For example, the 1993-94 Main Estimates for the Public Service Commission (Staffing) contain mostly information about the volume of staffing activities. More comprehensive indicators could be used to provide members of the Legislative Assembly with more relevant information, such as:

##### Efficiency of the staffing process.

- Average overall time to hire various categories of employees, and changes over the years.
- Cost per employee hired for various categories of employment.
- Number and percentage of extensions of term, auxiliary and other temporary categories of personnel.

##### Effectiveness of the staffing process.

- Degree of satisfaction of managers with the performance of employees hired.
- Retention rates; i.e., proportion of employees still in place after a specified period of time.

##### Application of merit.

- Number and percentage of appointments resulting from exemptions.
- Percentage of appeals allowed, and changes over the years.
- Perceptions of employees about the application of merit in their departments or work units.
- Number of acting appointments and the length of period.
- Percentage of promotions resulting from the confirmation of acting appointments.
- Number and percentage of permanent appointments of term, auxiliary or other categories of personnel.
- Results of audits carried out in departments and degree of compliance with instrument of delegation.

##### Employment equity.

- Number and percentage of appointments of members of target groups over the period, and changes over the years.
- Number and percentage of promotions resulting from the appointment of members of target groups, and changes over the years.
- Retention rates for members of target groups; i.e., number still in the organization after a specified period of time.

These indicators illustrate what could be done to provide more relevant information on staffing to the various stakeholders, including members of the Legislative Assembly.

**3.68** Discussions with managers revealed that the appraisal processes in place for other employees were also perceived as inadequate, not working and not useful. Results of our survey of management-of-people practices revealed that there is cause for concern about performance assessments. Only 38 percent of those we surveyed agreed that their superiors give them regular feedback and coaching. Many also complained that appraisals are not completed, or that there are very long delays in completing them.

#### Insufficient analysis or consideration of alternatives

**3.69** Studies of problems and analyses of solutions at times failed to identify significant aspects of a problem, or did not give sufficient consideration to the full cost associated with the problem or the solutions being considered. Sometimes these were not readily apparent to the people conducting the evaluation. For example, a review of the efficiency of the staffing process, conducted by the Commission in departments, did not consider the interval from the departure of the former employee through the time devoted to satisfying the departmental internal approval process before a staffing action was forwarded to the Commission. This process can be the cause of significant delay. Because of general weaknesses in human resource information systems, we found there is little or no analysis of the number and frequency of various competitions, types of appointments or absenteeism patterns so that related practices could be improved over time. In our opinion, more complete and rigorous studies of

problems and thorough analyses of alternative solutions are needed.

### **Little or no experimentation or pilot projects**

**3.70** Because change presents a certain degree of uncertainty and risk, piloting or experimenting on a small scale before fully implementing change can be appropriate. This approach to change is useful in situations where the magnitude of the contemplated change is significant and the risk associated with the change is high. Piloting or experimenting also takes fewer resources, making it easier to find volunteers ready to “plunge” and take the risk. Pilots projects greatly facilitate implementation on a larger scale at a later date, because of the knowledge acquired. Learning from experience can also contribute significantly to building trust among those delegating authority, those exercising the delegated authority and those subject to it. In the end, each stakeholder has a better understanding and appreciation of the problems the others face. We found no evidence of rigorous piloting or experimentation in previous attempts to bring about change in human resource management, such as delegating staffing authority to departments.

### **Lack of periodic evaluation for sustained improvement**

**3.71** To ensure that there is continuous improvement, results or progress must be measured. We found that there are no periodic reviews or evaluation mechanisms to ensure gradual and continuous improvement. The internal audit/management improvement function has been inoperative since 1991, and a program evaluation

function has not yet been put into place. Although the PSC conducts audits of delegated staffing in departments, we observed a number of serious deficiencies, as reported in Section 4 of this report, dealing with staffing practices.

**3.72** A dynamic internal audit or management improvement function under strong leadership from the Executive Council Office or the Management Board could provide important expertise and much-needed support — including support to the PSC — in identifying human resource issues and evaluating alternative solutions, including their cost-effectiveness. Furthermore, such a function could carry out periodic evaluations to provide assurance that corrective action has been implemented as planned and has resulted in the expected improvement, or that objectives have been achieved. Properly used, internal audit or a management improvement function can be a very powerful positive force in the management of change.

**3.73** In the absence of adequate performance management practices such as those described here, deputies do not have a clear idea of what is expected of them. Furthermore, Cabinet and the Management Board will have no assurance that progress is made or that desired results in human resource management are achieved.

**3.74** Our study demonstrated that the current emphasis on detailed controls of activities, expenditures and processes will not lead to empowering departments or employees. For true empowerment to occur, a focus on results, performance measures and accountability must be emphasized.

In our opinion, more complete and rigorous studies of problems and analyses of alternative solutions are needed.

We found no evidence of rigorous piloting or experimentation in previous attempts to bring about change in human resource management, such as delegating staffing authority to departments.

Properly used, internal audit or a management improvement function can be a very powerful positive force in the management of change.

**3.75** The problems faced by YTG in human resource management are not unique. In large measure, they are similar to those experienced by public service in Canada and throughout the world. One significant difference, however, is that other jurisdictions have already undertaken significant reforms of their public service to make it more efficient, more effective and more responsive. YTG has not yet taken that big step. We believe that YTG should learn from the experience of others. However, the change process adopted must fit the unique characteristics of YTG and respect the culture, values and aspirations of Yukoners. Exhibit 3.5 illustrates one of the mechanisms put in place by organizations to assist in the change process.

### **3.76 There is a need for the Executive Council Office and the**

#### **Exhibit 3.5**

##### **Councils for Change**

The task is to devise ways of drawing out the views of employees at all levels, recognizing that traditional structures with many hierarchical levels tend to filter out the views from further down the organization. Too often, top management is perceived to be cut off, out of touch with what is happening on the “shop floor” or at the point of contact with clients.

Some high-performing organizations seek input through regular employee attitude surveys. This can tell the leadership whether employees at all levels feel they know where the organization is going, feel they are given the tools to do the job and feel treated fairly. Trends in survey results can be invaluable in signalling to management the need for certain types of action.

Other organizations place a major emphasis on Japanese techniques such as quality circles – groups of employees in a particular work area meeting regularly to seek ways of improving the unit’s performance.

At Weston’s, all plants have one or several “Continuous Improvement Committees”.

The first councils tended to be groups of about 20 employees, representing all parts of a department and all levels of employees, with an open-ended mandate to identify problems and come up with proposals to solve them.

Later ones have been more specific to part of a department (a division or a region) and close to the model of a Continuous Improvement Committee. Another variant has been a task force of much the same composition but focused on a specific issue such as developing a draft Mission Statement.

In Australia, a statutory Management Advisory Board (MAB) advises the government on significant management issues facing the Australian public service. The MAB is assisted by a Management Improvement Advisory Committee, which has been a driving force in public service reform.

Source: Information Bulletin of the Public Service 2000, No. 91-6, May 1991.

**Management Board to put in place mechanisms to ensure that the change process for improvement in human resource management is rigorously managed. More specifically, they must ensure that:**

- the change initiatives are managed in a context of a global, integrated and planned strategy for continuous improvement;
- stakeholders have appropriate avenues for input, consultation and genuine participation in the analysis of problems and in the development of solutions. Such avenues could take the form of “councils for change”;
- goals are set, and performance monitored and assessed against the goals and corrective action taken where appropriate, to ensure that the goals will be achieved within a reasonable time;
- those charged with responsibility for assessing the need for a specific change, evaluating solutions or implementing the change have the necessary support and expertise and the authority to make the appropriate decisions;
- stakeholders are informed effectively throughout the process and about the decision, and understand the reasons for effecting or not effecting the proposed change; and
- managers and other stakeholders have information about, and opportunities to discuss, measures taken by other jurisdictions to bring about change in their public service.



## The key to change: the work force's motivation and dedication to serving Yukoners

**3.77** During our study, we were able to identify a number of opportunities for improvement and savings.

However, these represent only a small fraction of the opportunities that exist and that the some 3,000 employees of the YTG know about. During our meetings and discussions with employees in Whitehorse, Watson Lake and Dawson City, we were provided with myriad examples of situations where, in the opinion of employees, there could be significant improvements.

**3.78** There were, however, perceptions among employees we surveyed that their knowledge, experience and capabilities are not always put to use. In our survey, many expressed the view that their abilities to work better or “smarter” are not always recognized. Some of the reasons mentioned include:

- Lack of opportunities to present and discuss ideas. For example, there were no employee suggestion or recognition and awards programs, councils for change or continuous management improvement initiatives in place in any of the central agencies or departments we examined.
- Lack of trust, authoritarian attitudes, perceptions or belief that subordinates cannot make a meaningful contribution to improving efficiency or effectiveness.
- Managers so busy with work or “managing up” that they do not have time to listen.

- Natural resistance to change because it is disruptive — “We have always done it this way, why change?”
- Apathy resulting from past experiences with efforts to make changes.

**3.79** We think that there are ample opportunities to make better use of the talents of YTG employees and to build on their motivation and dedication to provide better services to Yukoners. For example, for two years YTG has been looking to recruit staff externally for the internal audit/management improvement function. At the conclusion of our study, efforts had been unsuccessful. In our opinion, the staffing of the internal audit/management improvement function is a perfect opportunity for somebody at the level of assistant deputy minister or director with potential and credibility, as well as for other YTG employees. Such assignments would provide employees with a unique opportunity to provide a service and to identify opportunities for savings, building on their experience and knowledge of the YTG and its people.

**3.80** Using secondments or rotational assignments to staff the internal audit/management improvement function would permit departmental personnel to have a better understanding and appreciation of the YTG “corporate” perspective. It would also familiarize them with quantitative and evaluative methods, which would contribute to bringing about a performance management culture. It would permit fluctuation in resourcing levels to meet the workload as needed. If and when necessary, the need for specialized expertise in such fields as accounting or program evaluation could be met through interchange with other

In our survey, many expressed the view that their abilities to work better or “smarter” are not always recognized.

We think that there are ample opportunities to make better use of the talents of YTG employees.

One of the most significant challenges faced by the YTG in the field of human resource management is finding ways to mobilize the work force and “tap the brains”, knowledge and experience of its employees to eliminate waste and reduce inefficiency.

governments and the private sector, or by contracting.

**3.81** In using the internal audit/management improvement function as a training opportunity, YTG would do what most of the private sector does, since very few private sector firms have career auditors. Many private sector firms use seconded personnel on rotation for two to four years.

**3.82** Sharing “best practices” is another way to make better use of the talents of YTG employees. We found that there is little sharing of ideas within, but in particular among, departments. Our meetings were often the first opportunity that many employees had to discuss issues outside the boundaries of their

departments. Often, they realized that they have little or poor understanding of the roles and responsibilities of colleagues in other departments. They also found out that colleagues sometimes use different and better approaches to solving problems similar to theirs. In our examination of the process for acquisition of staff we found that some departments have developed innovative approaches to testing certain abilities or skills. Because YTG does not have easy access to outside expertise, we believe that more sharing of best practices or providing comparative information could contribute significantly to building a “learning” culture, as well as bridging the various “solitudes” that appear to exist in YTG. Sharing best practices could also go a long way to convincing the sceptics that change and improvement are indeed possible, even within current constraints. It could also instill sound and non-threatening competition for excellence among people, while helping to build morale.

**3.83** Because of the difficulty of providing training opportunities to personnel in the regions, consideration could also be given by the PSC or departments to “training the trainers”, instead of providing direct training for all staff. For example, it should be possible for regional offices in one area to pay for sending one or two persons to a Commission course, a conference in Whitehorse or “outside”, with the understanding that they will train others upon their return.

**3.84** One of the most significant challenges faced by the YTG government in the field of human resource management is finding ways to mobilize the work force and “tap the brains”, knowledge and experience of its employees to

### Exhibit 3.6

#### Providing Proper Incentives

Organizations use various incentives to foster improvements, savings, increased revenues or greater efficiency and effectiveness. Here are some:

- Departments or work units retain part or all of the money unspent at the end of the fiscal year.
- Departments or work units retain all or an established proportion of the revenues generated through fees, service charges or royalties resulting from their suggestions. This money can be used for predetermined purposes such as equipment, furniture or training, at the discretion of the department or the work unit.
- A predetermined proportion of the savings achieved over a period is distributed among all employees of the department or the work unit. Although this normally takes the form of a lump sum, it can also be in the form of a salary increase if the nature of the savings achieved warrants it.
- Departments or work units are provided with a “single operating budget” to achieve predetermined results. Managers and employees are thus capable and free to decide the most cost-effective program delivery system to achieve the desired results.
- Employees in the work unit are guaranteed some form of employment security if suggestions for savings and greater efficiency are generated from within.
- Employees are provided with additional time off if they achieve predetermined qualitative and quantitative objectives. The time off can be used for self-development or other pre-established purposes.
- Employees are made responsible for the organization and scheduling of the work and for achieving predetermined qualitative and quantitative results.
- Departments or work units can reinvest part or all of the proceeds from the disposal of surplus assets. This provides managers with incentives to manage assets with greater efficiency.

Incentives that work best are those that are tailored to the nature and culture of the organization.

eliminate waste and reduce inefficiency. This is particularly difficult when there is a risk that the greater efficiency and effectiveness may lead to a reduction in jobs. Such a dilemma was clearly expressed in a comment made by one YTG employee we interviewed while examining information systems: “I know that my job is boring and that it is inefficient to do what I do, but at least I have a job!”

**3.85** The YTG can find ways to associate and share with departments and employees some of the benefits reaped from improved efficiency and effectiveness. Exhibit 3.6 provides examples of some of the incentives that can be used to encourage people to improve practices.

**3.86** In our opinion, the ability of YTG to find incentives and to motivate people to seek and participate actively in the change process will determine, to a large extent, its success in effecting some of the fundamental changes in attitude that are needed.

**3.87** There is a need to ensure that:

- **the proposed changes in human resource management focus on improvement in service delivery and thus capitalize on the commitment and dedication of YTG employees to provide high-quality service to Yukoners;**
- **mechanisms are in place to make the best use of the knowledge and skills of YTG employees in identifying areas for improvements and to involve them in developing appropriate solutions; and**
- **implicit and explicit incentives, recognition and rewards mechanisms are developed and put in place and are working properly to support the achievement of the desired results.**



## Section 4

### ACQUISITION OF STAFF





## ACQUISITION OF STAFF

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## Section 4

### ACQUISITION OF STAFF

#### Objective and Scope

**4.1** The objective of this project was to review the activities, functions and practices involved in the acquisition of staff. This covered the process from the point when former employees departed or managers identified staffing needs until newly appointed employees were working satisfactorily. We reviewed a sample of representative appointments to identify practices where efficiency and effectiveness could be improved.

**4.2** The study reviewed the staffing processes of the Public Service Commission and four entities:

- Department of Community and Transportation Services;
- Department of Government Services;
- Department of Health and Social Services; and
- Yukon Housing Corporation.

**4.3** We reviewed a total of 35 appointments. For each appointment, we examined the length of time it took to staff the position, from the point when the former employee departed or the manager identified the staffing need until the position was filled. We also assessed the appropriateness of activities and practices in the following key areas:

- responsibility and authority for staffing;
- human resource planning;

- recruitment;
- selection — including screening, candidate evaluation, interviewing, testing and reference checks;
- orientation and monitoring of new employees; and
- audit and evaluation of staffing.

**4.4** We also reviewed the audit reports produced by PSC and Internal Audit, as well as other relevant reports and studies.

#### Observations

**4.5** The following sections contain the major observations from our review. Although we have used cases from specific departments as examples, the problems they reflect are systemic. For this reason, neither departments nor employees have been identified in this report.

#### There are delays in the staffing process

**4.6** In our review of selected competition files, we found that the staffing process, from the point when former employees departed or managers identified the staffing needs until the positions were filled, took over 100 days on average. There were variations depending on the type of appointment; for example, auxiliary on-calls from eligibility lists took about 15 days, and permanent appointments took about 130 days.

**4.7** For the cases reviewed in the study, Exhibit 4.1 shows the length of time to complete each phase of the staffing process. The majority of the delays occurred in the planning and selection phases. These delays have caused frustration and dissatisfaction both in departments and in the PSC.

Delays in the staffing process can be avoided.

**4.8** We examined the reasons why the staffing process took so long. We found that there were a number of reasons, some caused by departments, some by the PSC, some by other factors. We found in all cases that the process could have been more efficient if departmental managers, provided with adequate information such as turnover statistics and expected length of time for staffing a position, could plan ahead, initiate staffing requests sooner, start communicating and working with personnel officers earlier in the process, and establish expectations and target dates to meet staffing needs. Departmental personnel and the PSC could also take steps to make the staffing process more efficient. For example, anticipating the information needed by departmental managers and providing it ahead of time would avoid the

need to “hunt” for answers. Also, setting or negotiating turnaround times for all staffing services could clarify expectations, help save time and avoid unnecessary frustration.

**4.9** There is agreement in the PSC and in departments that the staffing process is essentially driven by the fear of appeals. The introduction of appeal rights has led to the search for an “appeal-proof” process at the expense of good recruitment and selection practices, without consideration of delays and costs.

**4.10** We found that the requirements of different employment categories have imposed further restrictions, rules and procedures on personnel officers and departmental managers. Casual employees cannot be appointed for more than 6 months, and auxiliaries must be hired for at least 3 but no more than 10 months. Departmental managers sometimes have to resort to hiring two individuals, or to requesting extensions, in order to meet operational needs. These rules have led to an artificially high volume of staffing activity because of successive reappointments and extensions.

**4.11** The rules have also placed a considerable administrative burden on the PSC and departmental personnel officers. The different employment categories have also complicated the determination of some benefit entitlements. Even the PSC has had difficulties determining some of these entitlements and, in some instances, inconsistent interpretations and applications have resulted. For example, in some instances, PSC Records and Pensions has had to consult with Labour Relations on the payment for statutory holidays for seasonal auxiliaries. Another problem was determining eligibility dates for probationary and merit increases and

Exhibit 4.1

Average Length of Time to Complete the Staffing Process

Staffing Phase	Average Time in days
Planning	36
Approval	12
Recruitment	17
Selection	30
Hiring	12
TOTAL	107

Definitions

Planning	From the day the former employee departs or the staffing need is identified to the day the recruitment request is received at the Public Service Commission.
Approval	From the day the Public Service Commission receives the recruitment request to the day it approves the advertisement.
Recruitment	From the day the advertisement is approved to the closing date of the competition.
Selection	From the closing date of the competition to the day the offer is made.
Hiring	From the offer date to the first day of employment.

the Yukon Bonus for auxiliaries accepting indeterminate/term positions.

**4.12** More important, a lengthy staffing process and complex rules and restrictions can affect management behaviour. Since managers are faced with operational demands that may require staffing needs to be met quickly, they may resort to alternatives and temporary measures, such as auxiliaries, acting appointments and secondments, thus avoiding the problems associated with delays in staffing permanent appointments. However, these temporary measures do not resolve the needs in the long run. They add a further administrative burden to departments as extensions need to be made and, eventually, as competitions are needed to staff the positions permanently. In some situations, the recourse to expediency can be detrimental to merit.

**4.13 There is a need for PSC to:**

- **simplify the staffing rules and process to reduce the administrative burden; and**
- **modify the employment categories.**

**4.14 There is a need for PSC and departments to look for innovative ways to facilitate and improve the efficiency of the staffing process.**

**There is tension between the departments and the Public Service Commission**

**4.15** PSC Staffing Branch is perceived by departmental managers and staff as more control-oriented than service-oriented. Departmental officials describe the Staffing Branch as “giving vetoes rather than

advice.” The PSC is able to provide assistance to departments only when staffing officers are available. As a result, the turnaround time for staffing services is often unpredictable and unreliable. PSC Staffing is also perceived as unresponsive to innovative ideas and change. It generally takes a long time for new ideas to be adopted.

**4.16** The Staffing Branch experienced high turnover in 1992. Staffing officers are perceived by the departments as lacking appreciation of departmental needs or lacking human resource training/skills. The generally poor image of the Staffing Branch contributes to its lack of credibility when the time comes to give advice to departments.

**4.17** At the same time, PSC sees the need to exercise control to ensure compliance and consistent application of policies and procedures. This was the case when the Staffing Branch, in its audit of delegated staffing, found a number of inconsistencies and misapplications of staffing procedures by departments. As a result, the Staffing Branch decided to audit all delegated appointments.

**4.18** Balancing the roles of providing control and providing service is difficult. It is possible, but only to a limited extent given the wording of the *Public Service Act*.

**4.19** We noted that PSC Staffing Branch has recently started exploring ways to adopt a more service-oriented approach. PSC officers have, for example, met with departmental personnel officers to discuss their concerns about the staffing process. However, other alternatives should be considered by the PSC to improve its relationship with departments. For example, some organizations have

Lengthy staffing process and complex rules and restrictions can affect management behaviour.

Departmental officials describe the Staffing Branch as “giving vetoes rather than advice”.

Balancing the roles of providing control and providing service is difficult. It is possible, but only to a limited extent given the wording of the *Public Service Act*.



tried innovative ways to reduce the negative effects of control by making it easier for people to comply, by developing simpler forms and setting reasonable deadlines. In these instances, organizations have viewed departments not as compliers but as customers of controls and policies. Some organizations have also conducted surveys of stakeholders' satisfaction.

### 4.20 There is a need for PSC to:

- focus on better quality of service;
- improve “client” relationships;
- work together with departments as partners toward common goals and objectives;
- explore innovative ways to balance its roles of control and service to departments; and
- obtain feedback on the quality of service from clients and key stakeholders, such as departments and applicants, through surveys and other means.

### There is no effective accountability framework for the delegation of staffing responsibilities

**4.21** Pursuant to the *Public Service Act*, the Public Service Commission has the power to “appoint or provide for the appointment of qualified persons to or from within the public service and to test and certify the qualifications of candidates for admission to or promotion in the public service.”

**4.22** In recent years the PSC has delegated some staffing authority to departments, but it has been limited to staffing lower-level positions and to certain aspects of the staffing process.

**4.23** The delegation of staffing authority is granted by a Letter of Authorization signed by both the PSC Commissioner and the deputy head of the department. The letter mandates the deputy head to conduct all aspects of competitions, to certify candidates for employment, and to make job offers, in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Service Act* and regulations and with policies and procedures of the PSC. It delegates authority for open competitions, restricted competitions and competitions conducted through the Job Desk. It also allows the authority to be sub-delegated to other personnel of the department, subject to certain conditions such as the completion of the selection skills workshop, or equivalent arrangements as determined by the PSC.

**4.24** Even when departments are delegated the authority to conduct the competition process, the PSC maintains a significant role through supervision, approval and the provision of advice and expertise. For example, the PSC is to:

- log the recruitment action request received from the department;
- approve the advertisement;
- approve the recruitment action request;
- approve the statement of qualifications prepared by the department;

- collect the applications;
- answer inquiries from applicants about the competition;
- be available for advice and consultation;
- maintain power to revoke delegated authority at any time; and
- conduct semi-annual audits of files for competitions held by the department.

**4.25** As a result, only limited staffing responsibilities have been delegated to departments. The PSC's influence over the staffing process is still more significant than that of departments, given the PSC's role in relation to classifying positions and approving any proposed exemptions.

**4.26** In July 1992 the legality of delegating staffing authority was challenged by the appeal of an appointment made by a department. The arbitrator questioned PSC's current practice of delegating its authority to certify and appoint candidates in interdepartmental and open competitions. This case could seriously undermine the PSC's ability to delegate its authority; more important, the credibility of the competition process may be called into question.

**4.27** In our opinion, delegation as practised is more a decentralization or "dumping" of activities from the PSC to departments than it is an empowerment. Currently, delegation focuses too much on compliance with too-detailed rules and procedures, providing little or no flexibility to departments.

**4.28** We support the principle of delegation of staffing responsibilities to departments by the Public Service Commission. However, for genuine delegation and true empowerment to exist, there must first be an effective accountability framework developed that includes objectives, guiding principles, performance indicators and measures, and reporting mechanisms. Departments should be able to exercise some discretion within the established framework. True empowerment also implies that training, information and support will be provided, so that those to whom authority has been delegated can properly exercise that authority, periodically assess their own performance, and improve it over time. A framework of this kind is not in place to ensure that quality and other standards are met and desired results achieved.

Without an effective accountability framework for delegation of staffing responsibilities, there is no assurance that standards and expectations are met and desired results achieved.

### Exhibit 4.2

#### Ten Expectations for Those Exercising Delegated Staffing Authority

Those exercising delegated staffing authority will:

- make appointments based on merit in a manner that demonstrates a commitment to fairness and transparency.
- be accountable to ensure that staffing decisions reflect the requirements and the spirit of the law.
- provide information and feedback to explain staffing approaches and decisions to those affected.
- determine the most appropriate staffing strategy, taking into consideration employment equity objectives and human resource plans.
- consider acting and term appointments as temporary measures only, and avoid giving unfair advantage for subsequent promotions or indeterminate appointments.
- use an internal process whenever there is judged to be a sufficient pool of employees from which to make an appointment.
- normally use a competitive process to recruit and promote.
- determine statements of qualifications on the basis of the job to be performed.
- use assessment methods that provide sufficient information to make valid and reliable decisions.
- establish bona fide qualifications and assessment processes that do not give unfair advantage to one or more persons.

Source: Adapted from *Draft Staffing Delegation and Accountability Agreement*, Federal Public Service Commission, October 1992.

4.29 Other jurisdictions have developed, or are developing, an accountability framework for delegating staffing responsibilities. The federal Public Service Commission is developing a new delegation-of-authority instrument that clearly states the authority, accountability, performance expectation and performance indicators. Some of these elements of the accountability framework are

illustrated in Exhibit 4.2 on expectations and in Exhibit 4.3 on performance indicators.

**4.30 There is a need for the *Public Service Act* to provide for an accountability framework, and for PSC, working in partnership with departments, to develop and implement an effective accountability framework for staffing that will ensure that principles are followed, standards met, and desired results achieved, while providing flexibility to departments through the delegation of authority for staffing positions.**

Exhibit 4.3

Examples of Performance Indicators

Ongoing Monitoring

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Term/Acting Appointments</i>        | 1. Length of continuous service as a term or acting employee.  |
|  | 2. Number of extensions of term appointments.  |
| <i>Employment Equity</i>               | 3. Representation of employment equity designated group members in recruitment and promotion.  |
| <i>Priority Administration</i>         | 4. Number of persons with priority entitlement who are placed within the department, from outside the department and to other departments.                       |
| <i>Internal vs. External</i>           | 5. Indeterminate appointments made through open competition that are staffed from within the public service.   |
|  | 6. For indeterminate non-entry-level jobs, the number of external recruitment processes undertaken without first having conducted a comparable internal process. |
| <i>Competitive vs. Non-competitive</i> | 7. Promotions that occur by a non-competitive process.   |
|  | 8. Reclassification of incumbents who had been in their position 12 months or less.  |
|  | 9. Term to indeterminate appointments staffed by a non-competitive process.  |

Periodic Assessment

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>Staffing Principles</i> | 1. Employees' perceptions of merit, fairness, equity, and transparency.   |
| <i>Evidence</i>            | 2. The effectiveness of departmental monitoring to gather and assess information about staffing.  |
|                            | 3. The adequacy of evidence to demonstrate that appointments are made in conformity with legal and policy requirements.   |
| <i>Sub-delegation</i>      | 4. The means to ensure that persons exercising authority know their role and responsibility, have sufficient knowledge of staffing, and have access to a human resource professional. |
| <i>Qualifications</i>      | 5. An assessment of the match between qualifications sought and duties to be performed.   |
| <i>Assessment Methods</i>  | 6. Validity of the assessment and selection methods used to evaluate candidates.  |

Source: Adopted from *Draft Staffing Delegation and Accountability Agreement*, Federal Public Service Commission, October 1992.

**Policies, training, guidance and support provided to departments are inadequate**

4.31 We found several other deficiencies in PSC's delegation of staffing responsibilities to departments, notably inadequate policies, training, guidance and support. For example, we found that some policies are unclear, and there is no comprehensive manual, handbook or other tool to guide managers and staffing officers. The PSC provides information to departments, but in a way that makes it difficult to have a clear idea of the requirements.

4.32 As a result, there is considerable confusion about applicable policies and procedures; in many instances people have misconceptions about staffing policies and PSC requirements. Exhibit 4.4 identifies a number of these misconceptions and indicates what, in our opinion, the requirements are.

4.33 For example, the confusion in the use of the Candidate Evaluation Rating System (CERS) to evaluate candidates in competitions has led to different interpretations. To some



people, it is a completely inflexible system that forces managers to give identical weights to knowledge, skills, and personal suitability, irrespective of the nature of tasks to be performed. Others perceive and use CERS with much less rigidity. Managers and personnel officers need to know what is mandatory, and where and when discretion may be used.

**4.34** Lack of clarity in some of the policies, lack of distinction among policies, guidelines and procedures, and the misconceptions all lead to a widespread perception that the staffing system is much more rigid than is actually the case. The deficiencies identified also lead to significant variations in the application of policies and rules and in the quality of staffing practices, as the 1992 PSC audit and our own review demonstrate.

**4.35** We found there is also insufficient training in recruitment and selection of staff. For example, the workshop on candidate evaluation was discontinued in 1991. A new workshop is being developed by the PSC Staffing Branch in conjunction with the Staff Development Branch. As an interim measure, job-shadowing assignments are provided to departmental personnel for practical training by working with staffing officers at the PSC. This is unsatisfactory, particularly because the collective agreement and the delegation instrument both require that delegated personnel officers take the workshop. Moreover, in our opinion, job-shadowing assignments are useful as a complement to training workshops but, when used alone, they do not provide sufficient training for staffing officers.

**4.36** There is also insufficient support from PSC to departmental personnel. For example:

- Communication between PSC and departments is ineffective. One example is the communication of decisions on appeals. Decisions have sometimes been misinterpreted by departments, partially because of lack of clarification and explanation of the facts surrounding the appeals and their implications for the staffing process.
- Insufficient staffing information is provided to personnel officers in departments. For example, the staffing activity reports generated by the PSC are not distributed to departments. After learning from us that the report existed,

The lack of clarity in some of the policies and the lack of distinction among policies, guidelines and procedures have resulted in misconceptions and confusion.

Exhibit 4.4

**Some Misconceptions of Actual Requirements**

Misconceptions	Actual Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All assessment factors (knowledge, skills and personal suitability) carry exactly the same weight, on a scale of six points each.</li> </ul>	These requirements on weighting are not specifically mentioned in the Candidate Evaluation Rating System manual.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A competition is required each time a term employee is considered for an indeterminate position.</li> </ul>	A requirement exists only if the advertisement of the competition for the term appointment did not mention the possibility of appointment to an indeterminate position without competition.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising under the local-hire rule:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– local and outside advertisements must be placed sequentially</li> <li>– local and outside advertisements may be placed simultaneously</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	No written guidelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of the local-hire rule applies to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– hiring within the specific community</li> <li>– hiring within the region</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	No written guidelines

Deficiencies in providing policies, training, guidance and support could expose the Yukon Territorial Government to greater risk of grievances and appeals.

Human resource planning should address both short-term and long-term needs.

departmental personnel requested a copy for information and analysis:

- Although there are computerized systems such as the Employee Information System and the Applicant Tracking System, departments do not have access to them. They cannot obtain information that could be useful for analyzing their performance; for example, recruitment and turnover statistics and information related to employment equity.

**4.37** All these weaknesses exposed the YTG to greater risk of grievances and appeals, which are costly and time consuming and undermine the integrity of the competition process. In addition, appeals and grievances fuel the establishment of more rules and procedures in attempts to make the staffing system “appeal- and grievance-proof” rather than fair, efficient and effective.

#### **4.38 There is a need for PSC to:**

- **clarify staffing policies and distinguish among policies, guidelines and procedures;**
- **communicate them effectively to managers and staffing officers; and**

- **improve the training, guidance and support provided to departments for fair, efficient and effective staffing.**

**There is a lack of planning for human resources. Staffing needs are not anticipated or planned for**

**4.39** Staffing is essentially reactionary, with positions staffed as they become vacant. Departments do not develop staffing plans to identify needs in advance; as a result, there are no contingency plans for dealing with unexpected vacancies. This can lead to operational disruptions and difficulties, particularly in situations that require continuous service or involve key operations. Exhibits 4.5 and 4.6 provide two cases that illustrate the negative effects of the lack of human resource planning. Exhibit 4.7 provides another case that illustrates the lack of comprehensive human resource planning to make the best use of existing staff.

**4.40** We found other cases that indicated poor planning in the use of human resources. For example, several employees who worked as “permanent” employees had been retained as auxiliaries. In one case a computer operator, hired as an auxiliary on-call, was actually part of the regular rotation in a branch and worked full time. These circumstances are not fair to those employees because they may miss the benefit entitlements of full-time employees.

**4.41** We also found that employees worked in an acting capacity that had not been planned — some for a lengthy period — and were later promoted without competition. Acting and term appointments should

### **Exhibit 4.5**

#### **Inappropriate Human Resource Planning and Staffing Strategy**

A regional supervisor position was vacant in the fall of 1992. The staffing request was initiated after it became vacant, and the position had to be covered in the meantime by an acting employee. At the same time, it was known that another regional supervisor position would become vacant in early 1993.

A local competition was held for the first position. It was supposed also to establish an eligibility list for the second position. However, only one candidate was certified, and was appointed to the first position. The second position has not been filled.

This case demonstrates inadequate human resource planning and staffing strategy by departmental management and staffing officers. The staffing requests should have been initiated earlier. The difficulties in staffing positions requiring supervisory skills should have been anticipated. To reduce the costs of running two competitions, an alternative strategy should have been used to attract more potential candidates.



be used only as temporary measures, to avoid giving the incumbents unfair advantage in subsequent promotions or indeterminate appointments. Furthermore, lengthy acting or term appointments may lead to perceptions among employees in these situations that the job is theirs, even though better candidates might be found at the time of confirming the appointment.

**4.42 There is a need for the PSC and departments to ensure that:**

- adequate human resource information, such as appointment and turnover statistics, is available to enable managers to plan and identify staffing needs in advance; and
- adequate staffing plans are developed.

**Statements of qualifications and position descriptions are not always consistent and effective**

**4.43** The statement of qualifications is a description of the essential and rated factors against which candidates are assessed in the selection process. It is based on the essential responsibilities and functions outlined in the position descriptions. It identifies the essential qualifications used to assess the candidates during the screening process, including education and training, demonstrated abilities, equivalent abilities, skills, and required licences/certification. It also identifies the rated qualifications, which are factors used to rate the candidates in interviews and in reference checks. Desirable and mandatory factors are specified for assessing the candidate's knowledge, abilities and personal suitability.

**4.44** We found that some statements of qualifications were not consistent with position descriptions. For example, in one instance a knowledge requirement of the position description was not assessed. In another instance, the requirements of the statement of qualifications were more stringent than those of the position description. These discrepancies could be signs that either the position description does not necessarily reflect the requirements of the tasks being performed or that statement of qualifications is being used to limit the number of applications. Inconsistencies could result in improper recruiting, screening and selection, and could reduce the chances of finding the right candidate.

Discrepancies between statements of qualifications and the position descriptions could reduce the chances of finding the right candidate.

**Exhibit 4.6**

**Poor Planning, Recruitment and Selection**

A key management position became vacant unexpectedly. The department was put in a difficult situation since there was no succession planning. As an interim measure, given the long process previously experienced in staffing this position through outside recruitment, a replacement employee was engaged from another department under a one-year secondment agreement.

We found that there was no assessment of the qualifications of the replacement employee against the requirements of the new position. In this case, there was no documented evidence that the replacement employee met the requirements. Further, the opportunity for the secondment was not open to other potential candidates within YTG.

This case illustrates poor succession planning for a key management position, resulting in operational difficulties. It also demonstrates the lack of a proper selection process to choose replacement personnel. This could be perceived as unfair to other qualified potential candidates within YTG, and the best candidate may not have been selected.

Staffing a senior position in this manner is not necessarily cost-effective. Given that such a position would require a qualified person more than a year to become fully functional, the resources invested to train a replacement will be lost when the secondment expires. It would have been more prudent to run a competition in the first place to recruit a permanent candidate.

The department is in a "no-win" position at the end of the secondment. If there is no competition, the merit principle will have been circumvented with no competition process to identify and assess other potential candidates. If a competition is held to fill the position permanently, the department has to ensure that there is no advantage given to the seconded employee in the competition. If the seconded employee is appointed, the department will be put in the position of defending its choice and demonstrating that the appointment is based on merit, fairness and equity. If a more qualified candidate is found, the department has been deprived of the benefits of appointing that person earlier.

Appointments through a non-competitive process, such as exemptions, need proper justification to demonstrate the commitment to merit, fairness and equity.

**4.45** However, we also observed that the PSC has taken some measures to speed up the process. In cases where several positions were identical, the same position description and statement of qualifications were used.

**4.46 There is a need for PSC and departments to review the statements of qualifications and position descriptions for consistency.**

### Exemptions are not always properly justified

**4.47** To ensure that appointments are based on merit in a manner that demonstrates a commitment to fairness, the competitive process should normally be used to recruit and promote. We found several positions that were filled by exemptions rather than competitions. What makes these appointments

questionable is the lack of a proper assessment process. Section 110 of the *Public Service Act* states that exemptions from competition are permitted by PSC if the following conditions are met:

- (a) a suitable person is available for appointment from a current list of eligible certified applicants for employment in the class in which the vacant position is included, or
- (b) it is in the best interest of the public service and the Commission is satisfied that a suitable qualified person is available.

**4.48** We found that the rationales used to justify exemptions were at times inappropriate. There was little evidence to indicate that sufficient information had been gathered to support a sound assessment of the applicants' qualifications. For example, we found these weaknesses:

- Exemptions were made for senior positions without the evidence of an assessment to evaluate the knowledge, experience and abilities against the statement of qualifications (see Exhibit 4.8).
- Exemptions were made inappropriately for acting, term or casual employees (see Exhibit 4.9).
- An exemption was made for a temporary worker who was then converted to indeterminate, without evidence of any assessment of qualifications against the requirements of the position.

### Exhibit 4.7

#### Lack of Comprehensive Human Resource Planning

The Continuing Care Facility was completed and ready for use in December 1992. The opening was deferred to September 1993.

Our review indicated that little was done in the planning phase to identify potential staff in the Department of Health and Social Services and other departments for transfer to the Facility. In September 1992, the Department had been asked to consider this further and to include such an analysis in the subsequent staffing plans. There is no indication that this was done.

Proper human resource planning would have identified how staffing requirements for the Facility could be partially fulfilled through the transfer of staff from the Department of Health and Social Services and other departments. Because there are plans to transfer some patients from the Whitehorse General Hospital or the Macaulay Lodge to the Facility when it begins operations in September 1993, there should have been consultations and negotiations with the Hospital Corporation or the Lodge for the potential hiring of available personnel and consideration of transfer of staff from the Lodge, a government facility. These alternatives should have been considered in order to optimize use of human resources in the Government and in publicly funded hospital care facilities in the Yukon.

Appointments through a non-competitive process, such as exemptions, need proper justification to demonstrate the commitment to merit, fairness and equity and ensure that candidates proposed for appointment meet the requirements of the position.

**4.49 There is a need for PSC to provide more guidelines for exemptions to ensure that the rationales used to justify appointment decisions are sound and substantiated and that the candidate meets all the requirements for the position to which he/she is proposed for appointment.**

### Some recruitment practices can be improved

**4.50** We found there are no guidelines specifying how temporary assignments or secondments are to be “advertised”. The process of identifying candidates for a temporary assignment is entirely at the discretion of the departmental managers. Without established guiding principles and guidelines, it may lead to difficulties since the best candidates may not be recruited.

**4.51** We also found that there are no guidelines for using the local-hire rule. This has led to several inefficient and ineffective recruitment practices. For example, we found several cases where insufficient numbers of candidates were attracted. Other cases indicated that the rule prevented departments from recruiting senior management personnel or professionals with special skills (see Exhibit 4.10).

**4.52** In one department we found that eligibility lists were not maintained for several positions, such as control clerks and

secretaries/receptionists. Where eligibility lists were maintained, they were kept by individual departments and normally not shared with others. Since eligibility lists were not regularly referred to, candidates had found other work by the time they were contacted. The ineffective use of the lists means that new competitions generally have to be held every time new appointments are needed.

**4.53** In several cases where there were vacancies for generic positions, separate competitions were run. There are no shared competitions by departments, or government-wide competitions, or central inventory lists to reduce the number of competitions needed and thus to reduce the attendant costs.

Guidelines for using the local-hire rule should be provided to allow flexibility and avoid ineffective recruitment practices.

Exhibit 4.8

#### Exemption and Promotion without Assessment of the Employee's Qualifications

An employee was selected to fill a senior position on an acting basis for a two-year period. However, after one year acting in the position, the employee was appointed to the position permanently, without a competition.

We noted that the exemption request, which also entailed a promotion in this case, was approved based on a declaration of the employee's satisfactory performance in the acting position.

However, there was no assessment of the employee's qualifications against the requirements listed in the statement of qualifications, either at the time of acting or indeterminate appointment. In this case the requirements are considerable, since it is a senior position.

Exhibit 4.9

#### Inappropriate Recruitment and Selection Practices through Exemptions

An employee worked first as an auxiliary, then on a term appointment. Before the expiry of the term, the department tried to hire him as a permanent employee without a competition, through an exemption. It was appealed. After losing the appeal, the department decided to run a restricted competition. The employee applied for the position, was interviewed, but did not qualify. This raises concerns about the fairness of the recruitment process and about the department's motives in requesting the exemption for that employee in the first place.



**4.54 There is a need for PSC and departments to seek cost-effective ways to recruit candidates for competitions, such as shared competitions by departments, government-wide competitions and central inventory lists for generic positions.**

### **Screening procedures are not always carried out properly**

**4.55** Screening procedures are conducted by screening and interview boards. The board normally includes the recruitment officer, departmental manager/supervisor or other persons as appropriate. Members of screening or interview boards are required to sign a written declaration that they have no conflict of interest. The applications are reviewed and screened against the essential qualifications.

**4.56** We found several cases where the screening procedures were not carried out properly:

- Several candidates did not meet the essential qualifications but were not screened out. One of these candidates was eventually hired.
- An outside candidate who originally had been screened out for not meeting the essential qualifications was interviewed. As

a result, time and travel dollars were wasted in interviewing the candidate.

- Departmental managers/personnel complained that some candidates had been screened out because of a rigid interpretation of their resumés by PSC, which meant that good potential candidates were not given the opportunity to be interviewed.

**4.57 There is a need for PSC, working in partnership with departments, to:**

- ensure that the screening process is conducted properly; and
- provide further training and guidance on the screening process to personnel officers and departmental managers.

### **The Candidate Evaluation Rating System is sometimes misunderstood and misinterpreted**

**4.58** The Candidate Evaluation Rating System (CERS) was established in 1988. Departmental personnel generally find that the methodology is acceptable, but they would like to see more flexibility in the rating allowed for each factor rather than having to allot six points to each. In addition, giving the same emphasis to mandatory and desirable factors could be inconsistent with the requirements of the position or unfair to some candidates. Some managers perceived that the inflexibility of the CERS impeded proper assessment of best fit and personal suitability.

**4.59** There appear to be misconceptions among departmental staff about what the rating system can and cannot do. This could be for

#### **Exhibit 4.10**

##### **Ineffective Recruitment Practice Because of the Local-hire Rule**

Two positions requiring professionals with special skills were vacant in two different local communities. The department, in following the local-hire rule, first advertised locally. No qualified candidates responded. The department then made another request to the PSC to proceed with outside recruitment. There were over 70 applications, but only one applicant was screened in, even though the application had been received late. Another candidate who had originally been screened out was subsequently interviewed as well.

The PSC and the department should have known this from previous experience. The local and outside recruitment should have been done simultaneously to shorten the time taken to staff the position.

a number of reasons, including insufficient training and guidance and lack of an appropriate manual to clarify the facts. Over time, various interpretations by personnel officers have solidified into a belief that they are the rules.

**4.60** The CERS manual is outdated, procedure-oriented and incomplete. For example, the current CERS manual does not provide the broad principles of staffing and the perspectives of the government's overall human resource strategy. Furthermore, it does not provide sufficient guidance on reference checks. There is a danger that users of the manual will follow the procedures and "miss" the overall objective of finding the best candidate.

**4.61 There is a need for PSC and departments to develop broad principles of staffing, in the context of the government's overall human resource strategy.**

**Interviewing and testing are not used to their potential as efficient and effective assessment tools**

**4.62** The method most widely used by PSC Staffing Branch and departments to determine the best qualified candidate is the interview. An interview questionnaire guide is developed by departmental managers with the assistance and approval of the PSC. We found several areas requiring improvement:

- Some interview guides are very long with as many as 31 questions. Asking too many questions can result in not covering some questions in depth where needed. This may distract the interviewers from their objective of choosing the best candidate.

- There is an over-emphasis on interviews for certain positions, making oral communication the key factor assessed. When this is not an essential skill the position requires, for example, custodial and maintenance and technical workers, it could result in not hiring the best candidates.
- There is ineffective use of practical tests to assess skills. For example, we found in our case reviews that candidates had been asked to describe how a task was performed rather than asked to perform the task. Tasks such as cleaning, word processing, writing, file organization and mechanical functions could be tested.
- Testing was not used as a tool to screen out candidates where appropriate (see Exhibit 4.11). If the skill required is mandatory, this could be a cost-effective measure since time would not be wasted interviewing candidates who later failed to meet the mandatory skill requirements.

**4.63** A grievance hearing was upheld on 8 September 1992 in objection to mandatory testing of the typing and word processing skills of government employees who currently perform these tasks in their jobs. The final decision was to require that testing be done after the interview but before a job offer is extended.

The overall objective of finding the best candidate could be overlooked.

Interviewing and testing tools for assessing candidates need to be re-examined.

**Exhibit 4.11**

**Testing Not Used as Part of the Selection Process**

- The ability to use WordPerfect software was a mandatory requirement for this position. The candidates were required to provide the results of a recent typing test along with their applications. However, WordPerfect skills were not tested during the selection process.
- In one case, a department wanted to test word processing skills, but the PSC responded that it did not have the capability to do so at that time.



References are not checked consistently and thoroughly.

**4.64** We note that testing has been successfully used in the federal public service, and that some of the tests are administered prior to the interviews. Candidates are thus interviewed only if they are successful in meeting the mandatory skill levels.

**4.65 There is a need for PSC to:**

- review and revise the interview guides to ensure that the interview is properly used in the selection process; and
- provide training and guidance on interviewing to personnel officers and departmental managers.

**4.66 There is a need for PSC and departments to:**

- increase the use of testing as a tool for assessment where appropriate; and
- examine the timing of testing with a view to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the selection process.

### Reference checks are sometimes poorly done

**4.67** According to the CERS manual, reference checks are done by the PSC, except for delegated appointments. In our opinion, the CERS manual does not provide sufficient guidance on conducting reference checks. For example, it does not provide a caution that the person contacted for a reference should be in a position to assess the candidate's knowledge and skills. If references supplied by the candidates are inappropriate, others should be contacted, with the candidate's permission.

**4.68** We found that references were not checked consistently and thoroughly. Some reference checks were done to obtain information on rated qualifications (statement-of-qualifications factors) and actual on-the-job performance, which cannot be fully assessed at the interviews. Others did not address the statements of qualifications, covering broad areas instead. PSC Staffing Branch, in one of its audit reports, also indicated that reference checks have been poorly done.

**4.69** There were several criticisms of current reference check practices. Departments believe that reference checks are not useful in the final assessment, because the PSC uses them only as a formality and not to disqualify or to re-examine the evaluation of candidates on the basis of the checks. Departmental managers also indicated that, in some cases, the PSC may not be knowledgeable enough to probe technical areas properly. There were also complaints that current methodology in checking references according to statement-of-qualifications criteria is too restrictive, and could miss the opportunity to assess the candidate's personal suitability. We believe that there is a lack of assurance that solid reference checks are made.

**4.70 There is a need for PSC, in conjunction with departments, to:**

- re-examine current practices in making reference checks; and
- provide training and guidance to personnel officers and departmental managers to improve their conduct of reference checks.

### **There is a lack of orientation and on-the-job training for new employees**

**4.71** From 1986 to 1990, a half-day workshop was provided to new employees of YTG. However, only four sessions were given each year since the workshop was offered only on request. Most employees were not aware that it was available. Ten sessions were offered in 1990-91. Reaction from participants was generally good; even employees who were not new found the information useful. Since 1991, the orientation workshops have been discontinued pending review and further development. Orientation training for new supervisors has been developed and offered twice in the last year.

**4.72** We also found from our discussions with selected new employees that initial training was poor or non-existent. There is no orientation on YTG and departmental objectives and operations, and insufficient on-the-job training.

**4.73** We believe that it is essential that new employees be provided with orientation training within their first six months. In the absence of orientation and on-the-job training, new employees have to "learn on their own". It will take them longer to become productive on the job.

#### **4.74 There is a need for PSC and departments to:**

- **offer orientation to new employees on YTG and department objectives and operations; and**
- **provide on-the-job training to new employees.**

### **Monitoring and follow-up of probationary employees are sometimes not carried out properly**

**4.75** Probationary employees are generally not monitored properly. We found several cases indicating that probationary reports were not always prepared, or were not timely. There were also criticisms by departmental managers that the six-month probation is seldom extended because too much paperwork is involved. We were informed that, generally, little action was taken to solve poor performance problems.

#### **4.76 There is a need for PSC and departments to:**

- **effectively monitor the performance of probationary employees in a timely manner; and**
- **seek ways of enabling departmental managers to deal with unsuitable probationary employees.**

### **Staffing audits conducted by the Staffing Branch are not sufficiently comprehensive**

**4.77** PSC delegates part of its staffing responsibilities to departments, and the Staffing Branch conducts audits on the competitions conducted by departments. The last cycle of audits was conducted in September 1992, covering the period January to June 1992. During that period there were 328 competitions, of which 41 percent were not delegated and 59 percent were delegated to departments. Files of delegated competitions were selected at random for audit by PSC staffing officers. Since early 1993, all delegated competitions are being audited by the Staffing Branch.

The absence of orientation, and insufficient on-the-job training, mean that new employees will take longer to become productive on the job.

The staffing audits conducted by the Staffing Branch cover only delegated competitions. Non-delegated competitions conducted by the PSC, representing about 40% of all competitions, have not been audited.

The staffing audits conducted by the Staffing Branch are inefficient and, with the exception of encouraging compliance, are ineffective.

**4.78** Our review of the staffing audits indicated several areas where improvements could be made. For example:

- There is no audit plan or audit strategy. The objectives and scope of audits are not identified. There is no strategy based on assessment of the risk of non-compliance or non-performance.
- PSC does not audit non-delegated competitions, which represent about 40 percent of all competitions.
- Sampling techniques are not used; all delegated competitions are being audited.
- The audit scope is narrow, limited to specific areas of the staffing process. For example, human resource planning, assessment of qualifications, selection standards, recruitment methods, orientation of new employees, and performance review of probationary employees are not covered in the audits. A wider scope could assist departments in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their staffing practices instead of simply reinforcing compliance.
- There is no audit program. The audit work done is insufficiently comprehensive to provide substantive recommendations for improvement.
- Management responses and action plans for recommended improvements are not systematically sought or obtained from departments. There is no follow-up process to monitor and review the progress of implementation.

**4.79** Given these weaknesses, the staffing audits conducted by the Staffing Branch are inefficient and, with the exception of encouraging compliance, are ineffective. They have not generated any significant improvements in the staffing process or provided any guidance or feedback that departmental staff perceive as valuable or constructive.

**4.80** In our opinion, significant improvements are needed to ensure that staffing audits are conducted efficiently and effectively and that the results of audits will add value to the staffing process.

**4.81** These audits should be expanded to cover all competitions, delegated and non-delegated. If managed and co-ordinated effectively, staffing audits could be conducted by the PSC, internal audit/management improvement function, or departmental managers and staffing officers. In addition to providing managers and staffing officers with a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the PSC, it would also expose them to the practices of other departments and provide them with training opportunities in review and monitoring techniques.

**4.82** There is a need for PSC to:

- **develop a comprehensive plan and methodology for auditing competitions, delegated and non-delegated, and to assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the staffing process in addition to compliance;**
- **consider alternative ways to conduct staffing audits to allow opportunities for training and collaboration among the PSC, the internal audit/management improvement function and the departments; and**

- **measure the success of staffing audits in value added through the implementation of cost-effective improvements to the staffing process.**

**There are no performance measures or indicators for ongoing monitoring and periodic assessment of the staffing function**

**4.83** Performance measures or indicators have not been established for ongoing monitoring and periodic assessment of the staffing function. These measures or indicators should be developed based on the expectations and standards that need to be achieved. Suitable measures could include, for example, the number of extensions of term and acting appointments and the length of these appointments, the number of appointments by different recruitment methods (open and restricted competitions, exemptions, etc.), the number of promotions and

conversions through a non-competitive process (see Exhibit 3.4 of Section 3). These indicators could be useful as a “scorecard” for assessing performance and monitoring improvements over time.

**4.84** These scorecards or performance reports, if regularly issued, could highlight deviations from standards for management’s attention. They could encourage self-improvement of performance when departments could compare with others on the basis of established indicators, and could further encourage and foster continuous improvements to the staffing systems and practices.

**4.85** **There is a need for PSC, working in partnership with departments, to develop performance measures or indicators for ongoing monitoring and periodic assessment of the staffing function in order to encourage continuous improvement.**

Performance measures or indicators could be useful as a “scorecard” for assessing performance and monitoring improvements over time.





## Section 5

# HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION AND SYSTEMS



## HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION AND SYSTEMS

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## Section 5

### HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION AND SYSTEMS

#### Objective and Scope

**5.1** The objective of this project was to review the information and information systems supporting human resource management. This involved a study of the processes and systems for collecting, analyzing, generating and disseminating human resource information. We also assessed whether there was a need for more accurate and timely information to support human resource management.

**5.2** We conducted the study in the Public Service Commission and four entities:

- Department of Community and Transportation Services;
- Department of Government Services;
- Department of Education; and
- Yukon Housing Corporation.

#### Observations

##### **The current human resource information systems are not adequate to support management needs**

**5.3** The Human Resource Information System of the Yukon Territorial Government was to be implemented in four components: the

Employee Information System, the Position Control System, the Applicant Tracking System, and the Leave Accounting System. Only the first two have been implemented; the third is not fully developed and the final one has been put on hold because of lack of funding. The Employee Information System has a batch interface to the payroll system in Payroll Services of the Finance Department.

**5.4** We found that some of the systems are inadequate to support human resource management needs. Some of the weaknesses are described below.

**5.5 The Payroll and Employee Information Systems.** The payroll system is about 20 years old. It is outdated and cumbersome. It has limited capability and is used only as a cheque-writing machine. It is a batch-processing system that requires excessive handling and flow of paper between the Public Service Commission and Payroll Services.

**5.6** The Employee Information System is a data capture system. It does not integrate well with the payroll system. Additional input procedures are required for each system. These include completing specific forms prior to input; sometimes the same information has to be transcribed on different forms and input several times. As a result, information has to be reprocessed and requires multiple handling and recording. The systems have limited capabilities and cannot perform calculations or bulk updates (see Exhibit 5.1).

**5.7** These duplication and systems limitations increase not only the workload but also the risks of input errors that could remain undetected in various databases. Manual processing of information is labour-intensive.

The systems are outdated, requiring extra staff and excessive paper flow. They have limited capabilities to provide the information needed for efficient and effective human resource management.



Currently, PSC Records and Pensions employs five clerks to process data input from departments; Payroll Branch has six clerks to prepare payroll input. We could not determine the total number of employees in departments processing this information, but it is likely to be significant also.

YTG has not made a decision to develop an integrated human resource information system. A recommendation was made in December 1991 to replace the current systems at an estimated cost of up to \$400,000.

**5.8** An efficient, integrated system should enable the payroll system to obtain information direct from the Employee Information System without duplicating the input procedure. There could be substantial efficiency gains since the procedures for filling out forms and re-inputting data could be eliminated. If appropriate access controls were in place, on-line computer terminals would allow payroll staff to input the data directly and make corrections. They would also enable managers to retrieve information as needed for human resource management and decision making.

### Exhibit 5.1

#### Duplication in Processing and Recording Information

Personnel and payroll information is rewritten and re-input a number of times in different systems.

- **Data input forms.** The Public Service Commission receives many forms related to employee changes from departments, such as pay, benefits, deductions or tombstone information. Most of these forms are completed manually by departmental staff.

Upon receipt, PSC staff enter additional information on the form (acting pay rate, etc.). The data are then manually copied to a data input form and then keypunched to update the Employee Information System.

- **Hire and Change form.** The overnight update of the Employee Information System generates many Hire and Change forms, which are printouts from the previous day's keypunching activities.

Bi-weekly, all data on these Hire and Change forms are electronically transmitted to Payroll. A large number of these forms require payroll clerks to calculate manually a pay adjustment, because the payroll system does not have the capability to do so.

These manually prepared pay adjustments are then keypunched by clerks in Finance because the payroll clerks do not have access to enter the data direct to the payroll system.

- **Bulk updates/retroactive pay.** Each time there is a general salary or retroactive pay increase, a separate data entry form is prepared manually and keypunched for each employee, because the Employee Information System and the payroll system are not capable of handling bulk updates.

**5.9** An internal study in December 1991 reviewed the payroll system and the Employee Information System for payroll requirements. It recommended that Finance and PSC jointly define human resource requirements, including payroll requirements, and develop an integrated human resource information system to replace the current Employee Information System and payroll system. It estimated that the cost of an integrated human resource information system software would be \$100,000 to \$400,000. The study failed, however, to take into consideration departmental needs and resources assigned to provide information to PSC and the off-setting cost-savings throughout the government that could have been generated by the change. YTG has yet to make a decision to implement these recommendations.

**5.10 The Applicant Tracking System.** The Applicant Tracking System was developed in February 1991 to provide four functions:

- improve the generation of correspondence to applicants at various stages of the competition process;
- make possible on-line inquiries about competition and applicant status;
- automate the standard manual reporting process and provide for ad hoc reporting capabilities; and
- improve communication with other departmental administrators about competition status.

**5.11** Users are generally dissatisfied with the system; it is performing few of its intended functions. For example:

- The system provides only about 30 percent of the down-loading

capability to generate form letters for non-delegated appointments administered by PSC.

Correspondence for delegated appointments is generated within the departments, without any support from the system.

- The system does not function for roughly 50 percent of all appointments, because of the delay in data input. The data are entered after departments submit the competition files to PSC, after completing the entire staffing process.
- The system does not provide on-line inquiry capability for departmental access to information. It is available only to PSC staff, although it was intended also for departmental personnel officers.
- The system does not generate a number of intended reports, such as eligibility lists and recruitment statistics.
- The system does not generate reports properly. For example, the Competition Report now exceeds 100 pages. It prints all transactions since the inception of the system, because it does not accept date parameters.
- There is no ad hoc reporting capability.

**5.12** Since the Applicant Tracking System is not functioning in so many areas, reports and information must be produced manually. Examples include month-end reports and information requests from departmental staff, central agencies and legislators. Users consider the system an added burden, since it does not reduce the workload required to maintain the manual system. No post-

implementation review was conducted. We question why such a poorly developed system was accepted and paid for.

**5.13 There is a need to improve significantly, or replace, the payroll system and the Employee Information and the Applicant Tracking Systems in order to provide adequate support for human resource management.**

**Departments have acquired or developed their own systems to support their human resource management needs**

**5.14** A few years ago, the PSC transferred its responsibility to departments for maintaining the leave and attendance systems for permanent staff. These systems are labour-intensive and are prone to calculation errors; they are often not current.

**5.15** The submission to the Systems Priority Committee in March 1991 estimated that implementing an automated central leave accounting system could result in a cost savings of \$45,000 a year. At present, the Department of Community and Transportation Services has two clerks who devote 75 percent of their time to the leave system; Government Services has two clerks who spend one day a week maintaining the leave system. Additionally, PSC requires one clerk to maintain the auxiliary leave records.

**5.16** Several departments have since acquired microcomputer-based systems, developed and maintained by a local firm, to keep track of leave and attendance. However, these systems are not integrated to provide useful information for government-wide human resource planning and decision making.

The Applicant Tracking System was poorly developed. A post-implementation review was not conducted. We question why it was accepted and paid for.

Systems developed for leave and attendance are not integrated to provide useful information for government-wide human resources planning and decision making.

The accumulated “hidden” or unidentified costs could well exceed the expense of making the necessary improvements to the systems. YTG might have to make an initial investment.

**5.17** The Department of Education has also developed its own system to provide absenteeism data for teachers and training data for administrators.

**5.18** There is a need to review these systems to avoid duplication and to ensure that, where appropriate, they are integrated to provide the information needed for overall human resource management.

**Poor systems have resulted in considerable additional cost and duplication of effort**

**5.19** As described in a number of examples in this study, there is considerable duplication of processing and paperwork. These “hidden costs” have not been identified or evaluated in any systems

proposals, studies or submissions. Although the YTG might have to make an initial investment to improve the systems, in the long run the benefits could well exceed the cost, given that the resources saved could be redeployed or used in more productive YTG activities. Excessive paperwork and labour-intensive processing have taken valuable staff time away from dealing with “real” operational issues such as providing services to Yukoners.

**5.20** Although many of the inefficiencies are known to staff and managers, little has been done to make the necessary improvements. We found that there was little incentive provided to encourage innovative ways to reduce time-wasting paperwork and processing. Despite several studies on systems needs undertaken in the past few years, YTG has made little effort to improve the systems. Inaction could be the result of a failure to recognize the extent and significance of the hidden costs of inefficient systems.

### Exhibit 5.2

#### Lack of Human Resource Information at the Departmental and Corporate Levels

- **Leave information.** There has been a significant increase in the use of casual and auxiliary employees in some departments, such as Health and Social Services and Education. This may be as a result of increases in sick leave, professional leave, and special leave. However, since there is no central leave accounting system, YTG is unable to assess the extent of leave used and its impact on government operations.

Information on sick days and leave balances could also be useful to management or for collective bargaining.

- **Project costing information.** The human resource information system is not able to provide basic costing data when required. For example, the Library Archives Branch requires these data since federal funding for grants and contributions is obtained under various programs, and salary costs of employees working in a number of these projects have to be allocated. The time spent on each project is recorded on time sheets; however, the payroll system does not have the job-costing capability to allocate the salary costs to projects.

Consequently, personnel staff must analyze employee time sheets and manually prepare journal entries to allocate the payroll costs to projects matched with the funding sources. Although the Financial Information Resource Management System was recently developed to provide this information, there were many errors in cost distribution.

- **Acting pay information.** The payroll system does not capture acting pay consistently. It aggregates acting pay with regular pay for the financial accounting system, making it impossible to extract any pay information for acting situations. Without reliable and complete information on acting pay, YTG is not able to determine whether it is managing its human resources in a cost-effective way. This could result in spending considerably more than necessary on acting pay.
- **Planning and performance management information.** The current systems do not provide performance measures or information such as turnover statistics, cost per appointment, and retention rate.

#### 5.21 There is a need to:

- identify and evaluate the hidden costs of maintaining the inefficient information systems;
- encourage employees to find innovative ways to reduce time-wasting paperwork and processing;
- cultivate an attitude of cost-consciousness; and
- promote efficient and effective work methods in collecting and processing human resource management information.



## Human resource information at the departmental and corporate levels is insufficient for proper management

**5.22** There is insufficient human resource information at the departmental and corporate levels to enable managers to manage with due regard to economy and efficiency. There is no integrated information system to provide management reports on human resources. Departments need to accumulate human resource information for their own needs and for central agencies, such as the PSC. Where corporate-wide information is needed, it has to be compiled manually by the PSC together with departments, on an ad hoc basis. The current practice is inefficient — it is time-consuming, prone to errors, and it duplicates effort. There is little assurance that information provided is timely, complete, and accurate. Managers and staff need better information for analysis and more informed decision making in managing human resources. Exhibit 5.2 provides several examples of the lack of human resource information.

**5.23** We found that some reports produced by the current systems are inaccurate and unreliable, as illustrated in Exhibit 5.3.

**5.24** Some departments also indicated a need for human resource information that is not available through the human resource information system, such as number of employees, nature of pay (overtime, vacation, etc.), translation to full-time equivalents, average teacher salary, total appointments in the year, and calculations of accrued Yukon bonus.

### 5.25 There is a need to:

- **assess both corporate and departmental requirements for human resource data and information; and**
- **prepare a cost-benefit analysis on developing appropriate systems to meet these needs.**

### There is inadequate leadership, direction and co-ordination in government-wide systems planning and development

**5.26** The Systems and Computing Branch of the Department of Government Services conducted two studies on information resource management in 1991 and 1992. Based on these studies, an Information Resource Management Strategic Plan was developed in December 1992. Its goal was to set a direction for YTG's information systems through the 1990s.

**5.27** The Strategic Plan confirmed that the information systems in place were not designed to meet the operational demands of departments, and that systems applications have been developed in isolation. Major departmental requirements have been ignored in developing corporate systems, because of a lack of

There is little human resource information provided at the departmental and corporate levels. When reports are produced, they are often inaccurate and unreliable.

**Exhibit 5.3**

### Incomplete and Unreliable Reports for Human Resource Management

- **Staffing activities.** The Staffing Activity report generated by the Employee Information System is inaccurate. A large number of staffing actions are reflected in the report because all errors previously made are also included. The system does not have the capability to delete errors when corrections are made. For instance, the hiring of one casual employee showed nine transactions. The report showed the employee being hired three times on 11 May 1992, terminated on 22 May, hired on 23 May, terminated on 27 May, terminated on 30 June, hired 1 July, and finally terminated on 31 July 1992.
- **Competitions.** The Competition report produced by the Applicant Tracking System is inaccurate. We found that not all competitions were listed. PSC has to maintain a concurrent manual listing since the computer-generated report is not reliable.



Departments have continued to develop “vertical” systems. The cumulative costs could be substantial.

YTG can no longer afford not to address the serious weaknesses in the information systems.

direction and co-ordination to obtain input and involvement from departments. PSC’s initiative to develop the Leave Accounting application was cited as an example of failure resulting from a lack of co-ordinated support.

**5.28** Consequently, the Strategic Plan recognized the need for improvements and made the following recommendations:

- Leave accounting should be selected as the trial system for common systems development.
- An interdepartmental committee should be set up to deal with common departmental systems.
- Standards for common systems should be developed by a working committee.

**5.29** This plan was submitted to Management Board/Cabinet for information; in the absence of common YTG goals and objectives and priorities, no concrete action plan has been approved for implementation. The relationships among the Information Resource Management Strategic Plan and the Human Resource Strategic Plan of the PSC and the goals, objectives and priorities of YTG are not apparent.

**5.30** Departments have continued to develop “vertical” systems to meet their operational needs. The cumulative costs could be substantial, and the absence of a “corporate vision” that would entail sharing best practices between departments could result in further costs.

**5.31** In the current era of fiscal restraint, YTG can no longer afford not to address the serious weaknesses in information systems for human resource management. It needs to take the necessary steps to make the systems more efficient, so that timely, accurate and relevant information is available for efficient and effective human resource management.

**5.32** There is an urgent need for effective leadership in the implementation of the Information Resource Management Strategic Plan in a manner consistent with YTG goals, objectives and priorities. There must be adequate direction and co-ordination of departmental and government-wide systems development and implementation for all resources, including human resources.

## Section 6

# MANAGEMENT-OF-PEOPLE PRACTICES: SURVEY RESULTS



## MANAGEMENT-OF-PEOPLE PRACTICES: SURVEY RESULTS

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## Section 6

### MANAGEMENT-OF-PEOPLE PRACTICES: SURVEY RESULTS

#### Objective and Scope

**6.1** The objective of this project was to survey and discuss, with a representative number of YTG employees, their perceptions about the degree to which they are empowered to do their jobs, the quality of direction/supervision they receive, and the degree to which they are satisfied with certain aspects of their work.

**6.2** We conducted the survey to supplement our findings and perceptions resulting from our overall assessment and from the first two projects we had selected for detailed examination: acquisition of staff, and human resource information and systems. Preliminary interviews with some 60 people had enabled us to identify concerns, issues and problems possibly related to poor practices in managing people. Some of the concerns included:

- real or perceived limitations on empowerment, such as a lack of information, tools, autonomy and authority, leading to significant frustration;
- perceived weaknesses in the direction or supervision provided;
- apathy and, more important, the belief that, despite every effort, little would change.

#### Survey Methodology

**6.3** Our survey and discussions covered employees working in the

five entities included in the study, in Whitehorse, Watson Lake and Dawson City:

- Department of Community and Transportation Services;
- Department of Government Services;
- Department of Health and Social Services;
- Department of Education; and
- Yukon Housing Corporation.

**6.4** The sample was selected to permit us to assess the responses on a government-wide basis and, to a much lesser extent, on a departmental basis. A total of 124 employees completed three short questionnaires and participated in the extensive

Exhibit 6.1

Profile of Participants

Dimensions	Percentages
Permanent Full-time	80
Other (1)	20
Management/Supervisory	40
Non-management/Supervisory	60
Whitehorse	80
Watson Lake/Dawson City	20
Administrative Support	28
Professional/Technical	30
Administration	17
Tradesperson/Labourer	11
Other	14

(1) Includes term, auxiliary and part-time employees

follow-up discussions. Efforts were made to ensure that employees were in relatively homogeneous groups, and that there was no supervisor-subordinate relationship among participants in any group. Exhibit 6.1 presents a profile of the participants in relation to a number of variables.

**6.5** For each of the three elements assessed — empowerment, quality of direction and job satisfaction — we first asked participants in groups of 7 to 15 to determine the extent to which they agreed with specific statements. Each had to complete an individual questionnaire, using a sliding rating scale that ranged from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Participants were then asked to answer an overall question on the element being assessed, and then to list the factors most influencing their rating positively or negatively, and to explain the reasons for their rating. We conducted these procedures consecutively, for each of the three elements.

**6.6** We pre-tested the questionnaires and process with two groups in Whitehorse and made revisions accordingly before applying them fully.

## Survey Results

**6.7** This report contains only the global and most salient points of the survey and of the ensuing discussions. Appendix B provides the distribution of ratings in percentages for each specific question. The follow-up discussions provided very useful information for interpreting and understanding the ratings. We performed analyses to assess possible bias. The results were generally consistent throughout, except where noted.

**6.8** For the sake of clarity, we have grouped results into three general categories: agree (strongly agree and agree); disagree (disagree and strongly disagree) and ambivalent (neither agree nor disagree). Where necessary, more specific distinctions are made.

## Empowerment

**6.9** Questions and discussions about empowerment were about the extent to which employees:

- have the necessary information and tools (equipment, material, etc.) to do their work in the most appropriate manner;
- can make decisions about how to do their work best, including making changes if they see something that does not make sense;
- perceive that they could significantly improve the way they currently do their work if given the proper means;
- are encouraged to explore better ways of doing things and to make suggestions for improvements, and whether their suggestions are considered;
- can communicate easily with people who can help them do their work better;
- have easy access to the training they need to help them improve their performance;
- perceive that mistakes are accepted when they try new ways of doing things.

Employees generally perceived they have what they need to do their work, except access to training and the ability to make changes as needed. A large percentage of participants agreed, however, that they could make significant improvements to their work if they were provided with the proper means.

**6.10** Approximately 60 percent of the participants agreed that they have the tools they need to do their work, but some 25 percent disagreed. In locations outside Whitehorse, 50 percent agreed that this is indeed the case, while some 30 percent disagreed that they have the necessary tools to do their work in the most appropriate way. Others were ambivalent.

**6.11** A large majority of the participants agreed that generally they have the information they need to do their work. Proportionately more regional personnel disagreed, which is not entirely surprising given the difficulties of communication and the distance from Whitehorse. Concerns were expressed by a number of employees, however, about several unclear policies such as decentralization, and changes in operating procedures or policy direction because of the change of government.

**6.12** Most frequently mentioned as not available — notably by administrative staff — were computers, appropriate software, up-to-date manuals and, in regions, training. In some cases, people claimed they had to share a computer with several colleagues. They perceived that this and similar situations significantly affect their productivity or their ability to do a good job. Professionals and managers perceived that rules and fiscal restraint are close to, if not already,

precluding them from providing what they consider to be an acceptable or even safe level of service. Others expressed concerns about the long-term effects of some decisions about services or costs, such as reducing maintenance of equipment or increasing overtime because of controls on staff levels.

**6.13** People in the regions expressed concerns that they are not always getting the equipment they order, but receive older or inappropriate equipment instead. They believe that people in Whitehorse are given higher priority for the newest equipment. Another of their concerns was related to delays and the sometimes lengthy process that has to be followed to repair equipment even if repair facilities exist in their community.

**6.14** Only 36 percent of the participants agreed that they have easy access to the training they need to help them improve their performance. People in locations outside Whitehorse, and people in administrative support positions, were more negative. In fact, a significant majority of regional participants disagreed that they have access to the training they need. Distance, current restrictions on travel, the lack of funding for department-based training and the difficulties associated with finding a replacement were mentioned as reasons for training not being available to regional personnel.

**6.15** Employees also commented that there is no orientation at the government-wide or departmental level upon hiring, and that newly hired employees can spend a lot of time “wandering around” before finding out and understanding their roles and responsibilities. In some instances, there seem to have been significant delays between the time

Approximately 60 percent of the participants agreed that they have the tools they need to do their work, but some 25 percent disagreed.

Thirty-six percent of participants agreed that they have easy access to the training they need to help them improve their performance.

Fifty-five percent of participants agreed that they can make changes in their work if they see something that does not make sense.

Seventy-one percent of participants agreed that they could significantly improve the way they do their work if they were given the proper means.

the person started on the job and the time that equipment, or even working space, was made available to the employee.

**6.16** Participants were generally aware of the training offered by the public service, although some said they had not seen the most recent catalogue and schedule. Although there was general agreement that the courses are somewhat useful, participants expressed concern that the training is too general and that it does not address their specific needs. In a few cases, the lack of training, especially computer training, was linked to the gradual deterioration of performance. Personnel in regions complained that, in general, courses are not offered in the regions and that, even when there are offerings, courses are cancelled because of an insufficient number of participants.

**6.17** More than 75 percent of participants agreed that they can make decisions about how to do their work best. However, only 55 percent agreed they can make changes in their work if they see something that does not make sense. Based on our discussions, people in the regions perceive that they have more operational or decision-making authority about how to do their work but not about substantive matters.

**6.18** A significant proportion of the respondents agreed that they can communicate easily with any people who can help them do their work better. People in the regions complained, however, about the difficulty of obtaining information from Whitehorse because often they do not know whom or where to call. In many instances, regional personnel claimed to have to contact their superiors or other personnel in Whitehorse for all decisions beyond routine or purely operational matters,

and said that it is often difficult to get a prompt answer from the right person, let alone consistency in the replies.

**6.19** A large percentage of participants (71 percent) agreed that they could significantly improve the way they do their work if they were given the proper means; less than 10 percent disagreed. We were given many illustrations of significant improvements that participants believe could be achieved, including reductions in costs or improvements in services. For example:

- eliminate the “spend it or lose it” mentality induced by the current budgetary process;
- provide more flexibility in the use of the budget for more cost-effective decisions;
- control results and costs rather than staffing levels or person-years, which often leads to hidden costs such as overtime or additional expenditures;
- reduce the number of approval levels by devolving or delegating authority for such things as deciding on overtime if it prevents additional field trips or unnecessary future expenses;
- decide about repairs by taking into account all costs, not on the basis of artificial limits;
- involve users in the design and development of the forms and computer systems they will be using;
- reduce the number of rules and unnecessary paperwork;



- establish simple mechanisms to save time, such as listings or catalogues for equipment or for people on electronic mail;
- train staff so that they can in turn train others at their work locations, instead of training everybody directly.

**6.20** Some 65 percent of the respondents perceived that they are encouraged by their immediate supervisors to explore better ways of doing things and to make suggestions for improvements, and that their suggestions are generally considered. Some 15 percent disagreed. Personnel in the regions were slightly more negative than Whitehorse staff. Part of the difference may be explained by the fact that superiors are not always present at the regional employees' work location.

**6.21** Sixty-three percent of respondents agreed that mistakes are accepted when they try new ways of doing things. Sixteen percent of the participants disagreed. Regional personnel had slightly more negative views.

**6.22** Many participants perceived that input, suggestions or recommendations for improvements that go beyond their work unit are "lost in the system" or are not followed through, that they seldom receive feedback or that, in spite of numerous attempts to bring about change, they have seen little or no result. There was significant scepticism and cynicism about a number of studies carried out in the past, by the PSC or by others, that have not led to anticipated changes and where employees were not informed about the results. It is obvious that, because of past experiences, many people have developed an apathy toward change

or no longer believe that improvements are possible, because they perceive that there is a clear lack of will to change.

### Quality of Direction/Supervision

**6.23** To assess perceptions about the quality of direction and supervision, participants were asked questions about:

- their knowledge of the goals, objectives and priorities of their work unit;
- their knowledge of the performance expected of them, the extent of feedback and coaching they receive and the recognition and reward of good work by their superiors;
- whether their superiors keep them informed of the things they need to know to do their work in the most appropriate manner;
- the assistance provided by their superiors to help them in difficult work situations;
- encouragement by their superiors to participate in decisions affecting them;
- the identification and management of poor performance situations;
- teamwork and distribution of workload;
- equity, fairness, respect and dignity;
- interest demonstrated by their superiors in developing their skills; and
- the extent to which their superiors practise what they preach.

It is obvious that, because of past experiences, many people have developed an apathy toward change or no longer believe that improvements are possible, because they perceive that there is a clear lack of will to change.

There were strong perceptions that “crisis management” is the predominant management style in YTG.

**The quality of direction and supervision is a significant concern to many. Concerns ranged from having too many superiors to not being able to get attention and time from the immediate superior to resolve simple operational problems.**

**6.24** Although many participants identify and sympathize with their immediate superiors, they are more critical of “other levels” in the organization. To many, the organizational structure is rigid and very hierarchical. It does not respond well to problems in the field, and requires that every problem be reported to the next level. Because authority is perceived as highly centralized and because higher-level managers appear to be busy dealing with the latest crises, there are often significant delays either in processing requests or in making decisions. Some employees reported that their own analysis of problems and recommendations for improvements are reviewed so often that the final product is unrecognizable.

**6.25** A large majority of respondents agreed that they know the priorities of their work unit. In our follow-up discussions, however, it became apparent that there is a certain amount of concern over the perceived lack of clarity about the priorities of the current administration, as well as a significant degree of uncertainty about what the future holds for YTG.

**6.26** There were strong perceptions among a large number of participants that “crisis management” is the predominant management style in YTG and that the “urgent” is often done at the expense of the “important”. For some participants it is difficult to establish a link between the priorities as they perceive them and the goals and objectives of the

work unit. Because of that, operational problems that often need only a simple and quick solution are perceived to be left unaddressed until they have become crisis situations.

**6.27** Given the perception that crisis management is perceived as the predominant management style, it was not surprising that a smaller percentage of participants agreed that they know what goals and objectives their work unit had to achieve this year. Some 22 percent disagreed. Once again, proportionately more participants in locations outside Whitehorse do not know the goals and objectives for their work unit.

**6.28** There was general agreement that better direction, a more active and planned approach to problem solving, a longer-term vision and perspective and more attention to operational problems and “thinking things through”, with input from those responsible for delivering the service, could go a long way in preventing eventual crises.

**6.29** Although a large majority of participants agreed that they know the performance expected of them by their immediate superiors, there were numerous and, at times, very strong criticisms of the performance appraisal process.

**6.30** To many participants, the performance appraisal process is not credible. Many claimed either that no appraisal had been completed for them for long periods of time or that they see no usefulness to the process. Employees told us that some of their organizations have developed their own appraisal forms or are thinking about it, because the one developed by the Public Service Commission is perceived as inappropriate. We were also told that the PSC requires that both the departmental appraisal form and its own form be sent for filing.

**6.31** The negative perceptions about the appraisal process may be partly explained by the fact that only 38 percent of the participants agreed that their superiors give them regular feedback and coaching to help them improve their performance. Thirty-two percent disagreed with that statement. Another explanation may be that a majority of participants perceived that poor performance is often tolerated in their work unit and that no adequate action is taken by management. Only 26 percent agreed with the statement that, in their work unit, poor performance is *not* tolerated and that appropriate action is taken.

**6.32** Among some of the key concerns expressed by participants were the perceived general lack of people management skills among supervisors and managers. One of the causes identified by participants for the lack of “people skills” is that the promotion process is not perceived to value or emphasize supervisory skills sufficiently, compared with knowledge or expertise, and there is inadequate training in this area before or after promotion. Many participants expressed the desire to be able eventually to provide some form of “upward feedback” to their supervisors so that they can improve their supervisory practices. Exhibit 6.2 briefly describes “upward feedback”.

**6.33** Less than half the participants agreed that the workload is distributed fairly among employees in their work unit. Thirty-four percent disagreed. This perception was a function of problems associated with poor performance and the fact that it is perceived as not being addressed adequately by superiors. According to participants, tolerance of poor performance by superiors often leads

to an uneven distribution of the workload among employees.

**6.34** Approximately 50 percent agreed that their superiors encourage their participation in decisions affecting them. Some 24 percent disagreed.

**6.35** Slightly over half the participants agreed that people work as a team in their work unit. Other respondents were ambivalent or disagreed, largely because of perceived “cliques”, or because they perceived that some people do not perform at an acceptable level when compared to other members in the work unit. This was believed to create tension among staff members and to make teamwork more difficult. There were also widely held views that, although the climate within the work unit is good, relations with other work units are more

Many participants perceive that poor performance is often tolerated in their work unit and that managers are not taking adequate action in this regard.

There is a perceived lack of people management skills among supervisors and managers.

#### Exhibit 6.2

##### What is “Upward Feedback”?

Upward feedback is a tool for individual and organizational development, designed to:

- improve two-way communication between employees and their manager;
- assist managers in developing their skills by seeking useful and constructive comments from employees; and
- enhance teamwork by giving employees more influence in the way the organization is managed.

Employees normally provide feedback by completing a confidential questionnaire on various aspects of their manager’s performance, using numerical ratings and narrative comments. Completed questionnaires are compiled, analyzed and summarized by an independent third party. Then the manager assessed is provided with a personalized report together with information and assistance to interpret the results.

A crucial step in the process is follow-up. When the manager has reviewed the report, he or she meets with subordinates to discuss the results and develop an action plan for improvement. The manager then discusses the action plan with senior management and incorporates it into personal work objectives.

Using such a technique, managers gain access to structured feedback and employees gain an opportunity to influence the behaviour of their manager and to build better relationships within the work unit.

Source: PS 2000 Information Bulletin No 92-9, May 1992.



There are clear indications of balkanization within departments, among departments, and between departments and central agencies.

problematic, with competition, turf disputes, an attitude of “it’s not us, it’s them.” There are clear indications of balkanization within departments, among departments, and between departments and central agencies.

**6.36** Fifty-one percent of respondents agreed that their superiors keep them informed of the things they need to know to do their work in the most effective manner. Some 26 percent disagreed. Among the reasons mentioned for not being informed: the crisis-management culture; superiors too busy “managing up”; superiors not being available or accessible when needed.

**6.37** About 50 percent of the respondents agreed that their superiors recognize and reward good work; some 22 percent disagreed. Others were ambivalent. About 65 percent of the respondents agreed that they can count on their superiors to help them with difficult work situations. Fifteen percent disagreed.

**6.38** Although 65 percent of the participants overall agreed that they are treated equitably and with respect and fairness, respondents in administrative support had more negative perceptions. These employees perceived that some superiors or some professionals treat them as “second class” partly because their positions are lower in the hierarchy. Most participants emphasized that respect for individuals should be a fundamental principle of YTG management and that all employees, although they may have different roles and responsibilities, should be treated as “people” equally capable of making a valuable and important contribution.

**6.39** Slightly more than half the participants agreed that their superiors show an interest in developing their skills. Close to 20 percent disagreed. Regional personnel again were more negative. This should not be surprising given their answers to previous questions about training and feedback on performance.

**6.40** Finally, 40 percent of the participants agreed that their superiors practise what they preach. Twenty-two percent disagreed. Others were ambivalent.

### Job Satisfaction

**6.41** Questions related to this topic were developed to elicit the perceptions and comments of YTG employees about:

- whether their work permits them to make a significant contribution to their organization while maintaining a good balance between work and their other interests in life;
- appreciation of their work by their superiors;
- general working conditions (satisfaction with pay and benefits was not included because of the current round of collective bargaining);
- whether they like working with the people they work with (colleagues or “clients”);
- whether their work permits them to use all their knowledge and skills;
- whether their work provides them with challenges and an interesting

Most participants emphasized that respect for the individual should be a fundamental principle of YTG management. However, some feel that there is not always mutual respect.

variety of tasks, and whether they are still learning;

- their interest in looking for another job if they could.

**The vast majority of employees are motivated and dedicated to their work and to providing high-quality service to Yukoners. Much of their frustration appears to be related to the perceived impediments to doing just that.**

**6.42** Fifty-seven percent of our respondents agreed that overall they are satisfied with their current jobs. Regional personnel are more ambivalent. Part of the explanation may stem from strong identification among regional personnel with the “clienteles”, notably because they live in the same small communities. Regional people admitted that they are sometimes inclined to work outside “the official process” to help people in their communities cope with an official, but negative, decision about a specific problem or request.

**6.43** There were some elements contributing more to job satisfaction than others. Participants often cited the nature of their work, as well as good relations with people they work with either as “clients” or colleagues, as the most satisfying factors, independent of the comments about the management of poor performance and tensions among units mentioned earlier. More than 85 percent of the respondents agreed that they like working with the people they work with. Only 2 percent disagreed.

**6.44** Participants nevertheless expressed a certain amount of frustration about the perceived

impediments to providing what they see as appropriate levels of service to Yukoners, and the difficulties they encounter in convincing superiors that some operational problems need to be addressed. Some 25 percent of the participants agreed that they would look for another job if they could. For many, this was a direct result of the perceived inability to provide the level of service that they feel the population or the clientele needs and deserves but that, for a variety of reasons, including changes in government policies, a difficult budgetary situation or inefficiencies, cannot be provided or has to be cut back to below what they consider minimum levels or quality.

**6.45** Participants also mentioned that, although they are satisfied with their work, they are concerned about the general climate, which they perceive has deteriorated over time. They sometimes feel isolated or that nobody cares about their preoccupations and problems. Many argued that problems are caused by “the others” or by “management above” or “other work units”, and this is part of the explanation for the poor climate. For example, some participants perceived that, because of other priorities and the “crisis management style”, their superiors do not devote sufficient attention to operational problems they encounter in their work. Another factor advanced to explain the poor climate was the level of uncertainty created by the change in government. Many expressed concerns about the impact of this change on policies they are implementing, on their work or, indeed, on their job security.

**6.46** The difficult current government-union negotiations were not mentioned as one of the reasons

Participants often cited the nature of their work, as well as the good relations with people they work with either as “clients” or colleagues, as the most satisfying factors.

Participants expressed a certain amount of frustration about the perceived impediments to providing what they see as appropriate levels of service to Yukoners.

Although participants expressed satisfaction with their work, they are concerned about the general climate, which they perceive has deteriorated over time.



A large majority of participants agreed that their jobs permit a good balance between work and their other interests in life.

that some people are thinking of leaving, or even that morale is poor. Some participants admitted, however, that a difficult collective bargaining situation does not help morale, notably because of increased anxiety or uncertainty.

**6.47** More than 60 percent of the participants agreed that their work is appreciated by their superiors and that they are making a significant contribution to their organizations. Some 10 percent disagreed. Regional personnel had less positive views, which is entirely consistent with their previous answers about the quality of direction and supervision. In follow-up discussions it became apparent that recognition of good work and positive feedback by clients and colleagues are important elements of job satisfaction for many employees.

**6.48** A large majority of participants agreed that their jobs permit a good balance between work and their other interests in life and that their working conditions are generally good. Less than 10 percent disagreed.

**6.49** Fifty-three percent agreed that they can put to use all their knowledge and skills in their work. Some 25 percent disagreed. These perceptions, coupled with other perceptions among participants that they could significantly improve the way they do their work if they were given the proper means, clearly indicate possibilities for improvement.

**6.50** Approximately 70 percent agreed that their jobs provide them with challenges and with an interesting variety of tasks. Roughly the same percentage said they are still learning in their work. Some 13 percent disagreed with such statements. The rest were ambivalent. Regional personnel were more positive, with close to 85 percent agreeing with the statements and less than 5 percent disagreeing.

## APPENDICES



## Appendix A

# Legislative and Administrative Framework for Human Resource Management

## The Legislative Framework

The *Financial Administration Act*, passed in 1986, provides a statutory framework for the general management of YTG. Under the Act, the Management Board, a committee of Cabinet, is responsible for co-ordinating the efficient and effective use of all financial and human resources of the government, including matters relating to:

- government management practices and systems;
- evaluation of government programs as to economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- the management, control and direction of the public service, including organization and staff establishments; and
- internal audit.

The *Public Service Act* provides the general framework for human resource management in YTG. The Act, initially enacted in 1976, authorizes the Public Service Commission to exercise powers in relation to every aspect of human resource management. For example, the Commission has the power:

- to develop, maintain, administer and supervise a competent and efficient public service;
- to make appointments to, or from within the public service and to test and certify the qualifications of candidates for admission or promotion;
- to conduct organizational studies on any department and to report as required to the Executive Council and/or deputy heads on the organization of the public service;
- to establish and maintain position classification and job evaluation systems;
- to take any action to ensure regulatory compliance and to investigate and report on any regulatory non-compliance;
- to administer programs of employee training, safety, security; and
- to negotiate, on behalf of the Government of the Yukon, with any authorized bargaining agents and to administer and interpret any agreed to collective agreement.

The *Public Service Act* gives little authority or responsibility to deputy heads except to supervise and direct the employees of their departments. Deputy heads are required to inform the PSC of any reorganization of positions within their departments.



The *Public Service Staff Relations Act* provides the general framework for collective bargaining. Among other things, it outlines:

- the powers and duties of the Yukon Public Service Staff Relations Board;
- the rights and authority of the employer; and
- the processes for complaints, certification of bargaining agents, collective bargaining and dispute resolution mechanisms such as arbitration and adjudication of grievances.

### Key Organizational Players in Human Resource Management

There are several key organizational players involved in the management of human resources in the YTG. These are:

- the Executive Council and the Executive Council Office;
- the Management Board and the Management Board Secretariat;
- the Public Service Commission; and
- departments and corporations.

#### The Executive Council and the Executive Council Office

The Executive Council is the Cabinet of the YTG. It is responsible for:

- approving all policies, including human resource policies;
- approving Commissioner-in-Council appointments such as those of the Public Service Commissioner, deputy heads and heads of corporations; and
- the performance management of deputy heads.

The Executive Council is supported by the Executive Council Office (ECO). ECO ensures the co-ordination and analysis of proposed human resource policies that require approval. The Executive Council Office is also responsible for the dissemination and distribution of human resource policies and manuals.

Although the responsibility for internal audit rests with the Management Board, administratively the function reports to the Executive Council Office. In spite of an attempt to transform internal audit into a “management improvement” function at the conclusion of our study, internal audit has been inoperative since 1991.

#### The Management Board and the Management Board Secretariat

The Management Board approves departmental submissions with financial and human resource implications. The Board also approves and issues to departments human resource and related directives such as the Interview and Relocation Expense Directive.

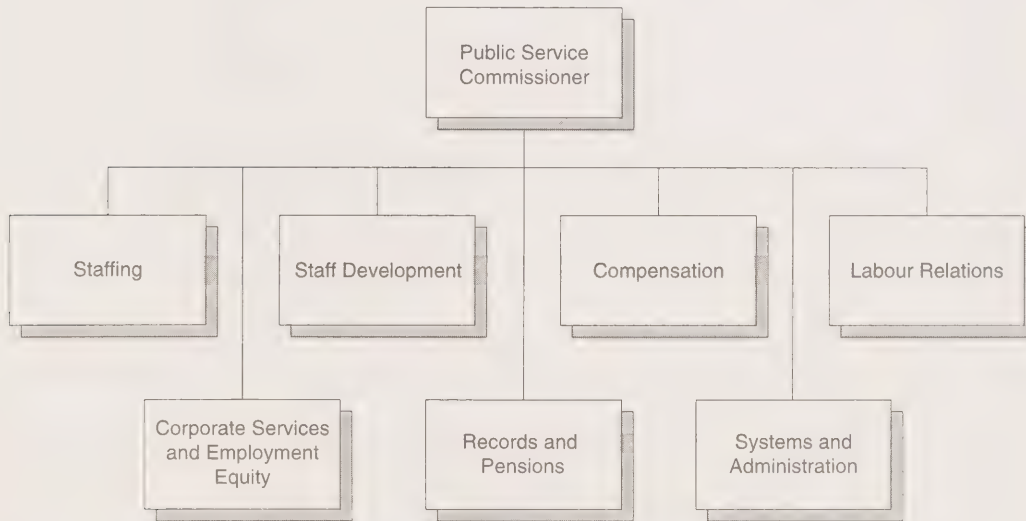
The Management Board is supported by the Management Board Secretariat (MBS). The deputy minister of Finance acts as Secretary to the Management Board. MBS has a staff of seven employees, mostly analysts.

### The Public Service Commission

As mentioned, the Public Service Commission (PSC) provides the YTG with corporate personnel services, and it has extensive powers. It is headed by the Public Service Commissioner.

At the time of our study, the Commission had a complement of 49 person-years (39 indeterminate and 10 term) in 7 branches (see accompanying organization chart of the PSC). It had an operating budget of approximately \$9 million. A new Public Service Commissioner was appointed effective June 1993 for 10 years, after an interim period of 6 months.

**Organization Chart – Public Service Commission**



### Departments and Corporations

At the time of our study, there were 12 departments, one directorate and 4 Crown corporations subject to the *Public Service Act* and the *Public Service Staff Relations Act*. Each department is headed by a minister. Corporations like the Yukon Housing Corporation are headed by boards of directors.

The deputy minister or the head of the corporation is responsible for supervising and directing the employees of the department or the corporation. Under section 9(2) of the *Public Service Act*, powers and duties in human resource management may be assigned to a deputy minister by the Public Service Commissioner.

Large departments normally have one or more personnel officers. In smaller departments, the responsibilities for personnel administration are vested in people who are also responsible for financial or general administration.



## Appendix B

## Results of Survey Questionnaire

## Ratings in Percentages

## Part I – Empowerment

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
1. I have the necessary information to do my work in the most appropriate manner	73	14	13
2. I have the necessary tools (equipment, material, etc.) to do my work in the most appropriate manner	61	15	24
3. If needed, I can make decisions regarding my work and how it is to be best performed	76	11	12
4. If I see something that does not make sense in performing my job, I can make changes	55	23	20
5. Given the proper means, I could significantly improve the way my work is currently performed	71	19	9
6. In my work I am encouraged by my superior to explore better ways of doing things	65	18	17
7. I am encouraged to make suggestions for improvements, and my suggestions are considered	66	19	15
8. If necessary I can easily communicate with people who can help me do my work better	72	19	9
9. I have easy access to the training needed to help me improve my performance	36	21	43
10. In my work it is accepted that mistakes can occur when you try new ways of doing things	63	21	16

**Part II – Quality of Direction/Supervision**

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
1. I know what goals/objectives my work unit has to achieve this year	54	23	22
2. I know what performance my superior expects of me	75	17	8
3. I know what the work priorities are	76	14	8
4. My superior keeps me informed of the things I need to know to do my work in the most appropriate manner	51	23	26
5. My superior encourages the participation of staff in decisions affecting them	52	23	24
6. My superior recognizes and rewards good work	48	28	22
7. Where I work, poor performance is <i>not</i> tolerated and appropriate action is taken	26	45	29
8. We work as a team	54	27	19
9. Workload is distributed fairly among employees	43	23	34
10. I am treated equitably and with respect and fairness	65	22	12
11. My superior shows interest in developing my skills	56	25	19
12. I can count on my superior to help me with difficult work situations	63	22	15
13. My superior gives me regular feedback and coaching to help me improve my performance	38	29	32
14. My superior practises what he/she preaches	40	36	22



**Part III – Job Satisfaction**

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
1. My work is appreciated by superiors	64	26	11
2. My job permits me to make a significant contribution to my organization	61	28	11
3. My job permits a good balance between work and my other interests in life	72	19	9
4. My working conditions are good	71	19	9
5. I like working with the people I work with	86	11	2
6. In my work I can put to use all my knowledge and skills	53	21	26
7. My work provides me with challenges	73	14	13
8. If I could, I would look for another job	24	34	40
9. My work provides me with an interesting variety of tasks	68	19	13
10. I feel I am still learning in my work	69	16	15









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